

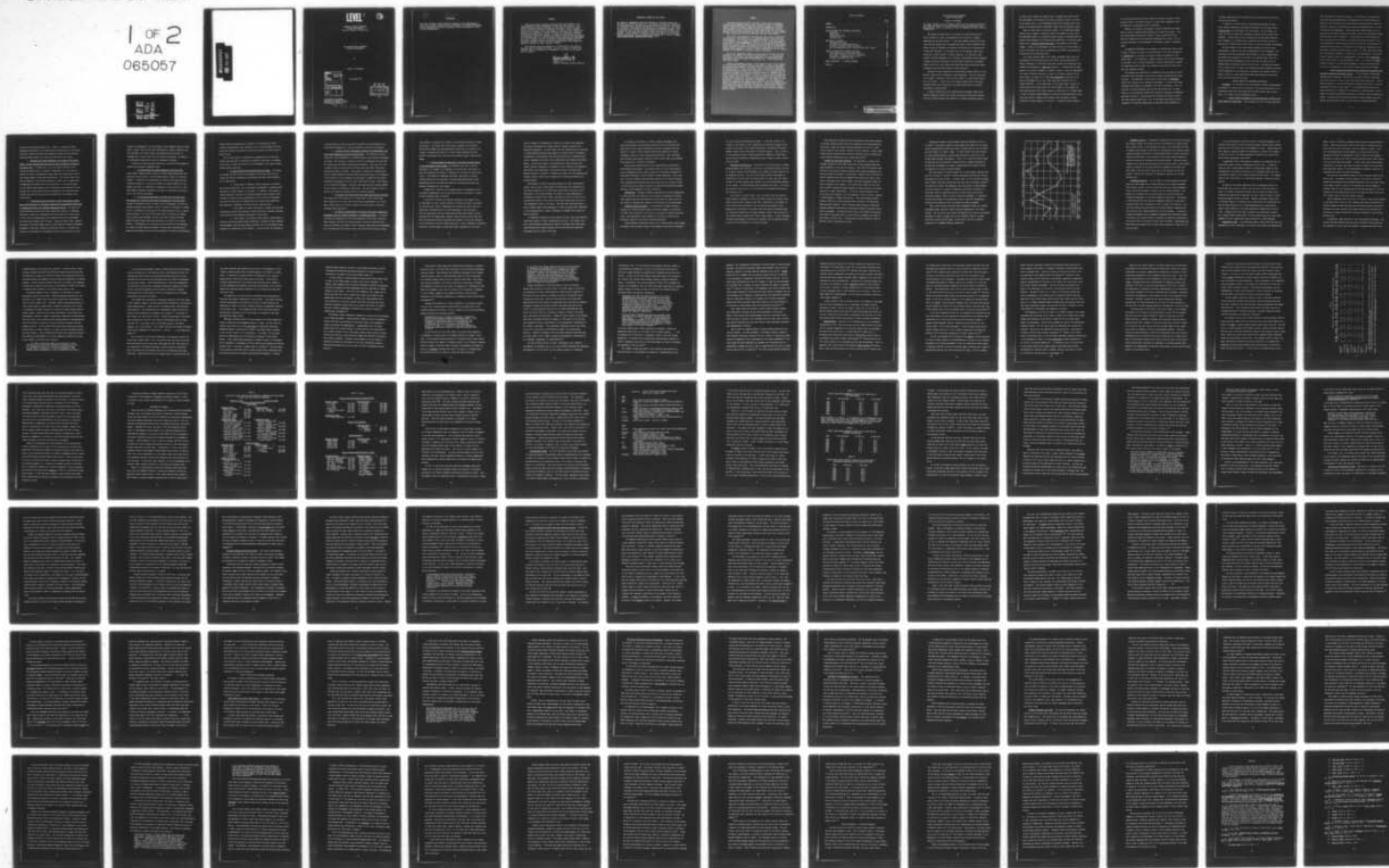
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THE SOVIET-INDIAN ALIGNMENT: QUEST FOR INFLUENCE

by

Robert H. Donaldson

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FOREWORD

This special report analyzes the mutual costs and benefits of the long-standing "special relationship" between the USSR and India. The author develops a rigorous framework for assessing the extent to which Moscow has actually achieved "influence" over India. After a thorough review of the evidence of the last decade, he concludes that, despite the large Soviet investment of aid and assistance, the observable "payoffs" for Moscow have been quite limited. As India has achieved--with Soviet help--greater capacity for economic and military self-reliance and hegemony in the subcontinent, her need of further Soviet assistance has diminished. The report concludes that the Indo-Soviet relationship exemplifies the modern-day "paradox of power" by which superpowers have found themselves awkwardly dependent on their supposed "clients."

This special report was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.



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SUMMARY

The Soviet Union has invested in India a large volume of material resources and diplomatic energy. Much of Moscow's effort to strengthen India's economy and military capability has been designed to serve the Soviet interest in promoting India as an Asian counterweight to China. The available evidence on the Soviet-Indian relationship in recent years, however, leads to the conclusion that the return on this Soviet investment, in terms of observable political influence, has been small indeed.

Since 1967, there appear to have been only three cases in which Moscow was able to cause New Delhi to do something which it would not have done otherwise: (1) the ban on the showing in India of the uncut version of the Western film Dr. Zhivago in 1967; and (2) the Indian government's hasty action in 1970, under Soviet pressure, in bringing about the closing of four US cultural centers, following the discovery that an unauthorized Soviet cultural center was being constructed in Trivandrum; and (3) the apparent Indian agreement to accept stringent safeguards on all its nuclear reactors as a condition of the Soviet sale of heavy water.

But in the overwhelming majority of cases the Soviet Union has been rebuffed in its efforts to influence Indian behavior. In some of these cases there is an evident and mutual disposition to discuss differences in private to limit the impact of disagreements on a relationship both sides value highly.

Indian decisionmakers perceive a well-defined need for Soviet support in both military and economic spheres, especially in light of the decade-long American arms embargo, the reduction of US aid and--more important--the Sino-US detente. On the other hand, India's 1971 victory, the growth of its indigenous arms industry and emergence of a nuclear capability, and its needs for imports and economic assistance which the Communist bloc is unable or unwilling to provide place definite limits on India's perception of its needs of the Soviet Union. For its part, Moscow perceives that the special relationship with India has brought diplomatic and commercial benefits which the Soviets are reluctant to jeopardize. So the evolution of Indo-Soviet relations has resulted in a symbiosis, but one in which the balance of dependency has changed dramatically. Indeed, developments since 1971 suggest that Soviet importance to India and its ability to influence Indian decisions peaked during the Indo-Pakistan crisis and have subsequently declined, whereas the Indian ability to exert influence in Moscow may be growing.

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THE SOVIET-INDIAN ALIGNMENT:
QUEST FOR INFLUENCE

Robert H. Donaldson

The views, opinions, and or findings contained in this report are those of the author and should not be construed as an official Department of the Army position, policy, or decision, unless so designated by other official documentation.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the nature and extent of Soviet influence in India, as manifested in the political, economic, commercial and cultural fields.¹ It has been commonly asserted in recent years that the Soviets have "increased the scope of their influence" over India or that the "balance of influence" has shifted as US influence has in some way "declined." At the same time, we are assured, there exist strong and lasting "limits" to Soviet influence. By utilizing a more carefully defined framework of an "influence relationship" and by examining a number of concrete instances of Soviet-Indian interaction, this paper seeks to arrive at a more empirically based and policy operational understanding of the nature and scope of Soviet influence.²

Influence is best perceived as a relationship between states, or as a process, rather than as something a state possesses. Like its close relative, "power," influence is best seen as a means to an end rather than as an end in itself. A state tries to influence another when it has some objective which can be advanced if the target state does (or refrains from doing) a certain thing.

A state's objectives in its interactions with another state can be positive (gaining a benefit for itself, getting the target state to perform an act which furthers the objective) or negative (denying benefits

to third states, getting the target state to refrain from certain acts). The achievement of the objective can involve specific actions on the part of the target state, or its achievement might entail bringing about some change in the general policy environment rather than any specific action.

When one state seeks to influence another, it is attempting through various acts or signals to change or sustain the behavior of that state. The observable result of a successful Soviet attempt at influence would be India's doing something (or refraining from something, or continuing something) that it would not likely have done in the absence of the Soviet attempt. Clearly, the realization of Soviet objectives is more likely to occur to the extent that they are compatible with India's own objectives, as perceived by her governing elite.

But certain actions taken by the Indian government which favor the realization of Soviet objectives may not result from an application of Soviet "influence," to the extent that these actions are perceived by the Indians as contributing to their own objectives. If Moscow and New Delhi appear to be acting in tandem on a number of issues, it may not necessarily be a result of Soviet influence on India, or of Indian influence on the Soviet Union, but rather of a common but independent perception on the part of policymakers in the two states that their interests lie in a similar direction. On the other hand, if the Soviets make a request for Indian action on an issue which is of little moment to the Indians--in which they perceive little vital interest of their own--or if Moscow seeks to alter or sustain Indian behavior in a matter on which New Delhi's objectives run counter to those of the Soviets, then the degree of Soviet influence is indeed being put to the test. A favorable Indian response

in the latter case would of course signal the greater strength of Soviet influence than in the former instance, in which Indian compliance could be achieved at a much smaller cost to New Delhi.

Moreover, an influence relationship is rarely completely one-sided; there is often a feedback effect which must be taken into account. Thus the Soviets might influence the Indians to take a particular action, while the Indians are at the same time influencing the Soviets to act in a manner favorable to the achievement of New Delhi's goals on a separate issue.

An important determinant of the degree of influence one state is able to exert on another in pursuit of its objectives is the type and quantity of capabilities it can muster in trying to affect the behavior of the target state. It is important to realize, however, that the mere existence of resources is not in itself sufficient; a state's willingness to expend its capabilities and the skill and credibility with which it does so are also very important factors.

But quantity and credibility of capabilities and the degree of skill with which they are brought to bear are not simply correlated with actual influence. Also important is the extent to which there is dependence between two countries in an influence relationship. A country that needs something from another is vulnerable to its acts of influence. Thus, in this case, the more dependent India is upon the Soviet Union, the more likely it is that Moscow's efforts will succeed in changing or sustaining New Delhi's behavior. But we should also consider the degree to which the Soviet Union "needs" India. For, to the extent that there is Soviet dependence on India which approaches or surpasses Indian dependence on

the USSR, there may well be a reduction in the Soviet potential to exert influence on New Delhi.

In addition to availability of resources and perception of need, a final variable determining the degree of influence is the target state's responsiveness--its willingness to be influenced. Are the Indians, at either the elite or mass level, disposed to receive Soviet requests with sympathy? A brief survey of the attitudes both of government officials and of members of the Indian public toward the Soviet Union can aid in assessing the likely weight of this factor in the Soviet-Indian relationship.

The next section of the study briefly analyzes the Soviet-Indian relationship in terms of the factors highlighted by this framework: the objectives of the two governments and the extent of their compatibility, the capabilities available to the USSR in its dealings with India, the degree of perceived dependence of each state upon the other, and the responsiveness of Indians toward the Soviet Union. Following this exposition, the main body of the paper then examines specific instances of Soviet-Indian interaction in the diplomatic, propaganda, and economic fields, in order to arrive at a more empirically-based understanding of the actual extent of Soviet influence in India.

FACTORS SHAPING THE INFLUENCE RELATIONSHIP

Objectives. On the basis of a close analysis of Soviet pronouncements and behavior in recent years, we can point to six Soviet objectives in the subcontinent which have been pursued for the past several years and are likely to be sought for the foreseeable future.

1. Enlist Indian Participation as a Counterweight to China in the Asian "Balance of Power Game." The attainment of this, the most important,

Soviet objective in South Asia requires: (a) exclusion of Chinese influence from India and Bangladesh, and minimization of Chinese influence in Pakistan. This requires in turn that Moscow's friendly posture toward the Indians be balanced by the maintenance and even strengthening of its ties with Pakistan and Bangladesh. Given traditional Indo-Pak enmity and the delicacy of New Delhi's relations with Dacca, this is a balancing act which requires great skill in execution. As they have for the past decade and more, the Soviets will continue to calculate that their own security and the containment of Chinese power will best be served by the maintenance of stability in South Asia; (b) enlistment of the Indians as partners in the deterrence of Chinese military action in Asia. The 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty was, from Moscow's viewpoint, a prime step in the direction of "collective security" against China; (c) encouragement of positive Indian diplomatic efforts which assist in the containment of China. The greater the public Indian enlistment in the anti-China campaign, the more confident Moscow can be in the permanence of the hostility between New Delhi and Peking.

2. Enlist Indian Participation in the Limitation of American (and Western) Presence and Influence in Asia. In the triangular relationship between Moscow, Washington, and Peking, the Soviets continue to perceive the United States as a rival in the South Asian-Indian Ocean area. Soviet-American detente is not seen by Moscow as excluding the pursuit of its own particular interests in this region. To a certain extent, Moscow still views the battle for "influence" in this area as a zero-sum game: to the degree that Chinese and American influence is limited, Soviet influence can expand. The Soviets will encourage New Delhi to take diplomatic and commercial decisions which assist in this process of lessening American

influence in South and Southeast Asia. Finally, in pursuit of their expanded naval activity in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf, the Soviets would like to have from India both diplomatic support and the practical assistance which India's port facilities can lend to this effort.

3. Encourage the Indian Government, as a Leader in the "Third World," to Take International Positions as Close as Possible to Those of the Soviet Union. At stake here is not only India's posture in the "rhetorical arena" (public statements, communiques, etc.) but also its behavior in various international bodies, where the Soviets would like to have Indian support of positions Moscow favors. The Soviets seek to promote the image of a Soviet-Indian identity of views, for its impact both in Washington and Peking, and in the Third World. In the latter case, not only should India support Soviet initiatives in the forums of the non-aligned, but it should also serve as a showcase of the "benefits" which friendly ties with the Soviet Union can produce for the nations of the "Third World."

4. To Encourage India's Political, Social and Economic Development in the Direction of a Socialist Economy (the "Noncapitalist Path") and a "Progressive" Polity (the "National-Democratic State"). Not since the early Khrushchev era have the Soviets viewed the creation of a Communist government in India as a realizable near-term objective; in recent years, in fact, they have demonstrated their awareness that such a development may create more problems than it solves. During the years of Mrs. Gandhi's ascendancy, the Soviets seemed content to work with her "national bourgeois" government in New Delhi, though they would have liked it to be more susceptible to the pressures of "progressive forces" in the country, if even

through its enlargement to include members of the Communist Party of India (CPI). Despite their initial dread following Mrs. Gandhi's defeat in the 1977 elections, the Soviet leaders soon manifested their ability to cooperate with a Janata Party they had labeled "reactionary," so long as it continued a foreign policy that was acceptable to Moscow.

In pursuit of these four basic objectives, the Soviets have sought to achieve the following intermediate aims:

5. To Build Strong and Lasting Commercial Ties with India.

Soviet-Indian trade provides an outlet for Soviet manufactured goods and gives the Soviets access to certain Indian products useful to the Soviet economy. In addition, the reorientation of India's trade away from the "capitalist markets" of the West and toward the Comecon markets not only weakens the fabric of "imperialist" economies but also can serve to reinforce India's diplomatic orientation and exert an influence on the direction of her internal development.

6. To Create Attitudes Among the Indian Elite and Mass Which Are Favorable to the Soviet Union and the Attainment of Its Objectives.

Through its diplomatic support of India, and its propaganda, cultural and exchange programs, Moscow seeks to build a "reserve of influence" in India--that is, a disposition on the part of the Indian political elite to support Soviet positions. Not only do the Soviets seek to influence the Indian elite through direct dealings, but they also seek to foster attitudes among the Indian masses which exert pressure on the elite in its policy choices. Instrumental in the creation of such attitudes is the fostering of a sense of "need" among the Indians--a feeling that continued Soviet support and assistance is vital to the realization of India's own objectives.

Soviet success in building such a "reserve of influence" will likely increase the possibility that India will act in a way favorable to Soviet objectives without the necessity of any prior pressure or other action on Moscow's part.

For the dual purpose of assessing the compatibility of Soviet and Indian objectives and of evaluating the efforts of New Delhi to influence the Soviets, we shall now proceed to a brief summary of five major Indian foreign policy objectives.

1. To Secure Herself from External Military Threat. For almost two decades--as well as for the foreseeable future--New Delhi has perceived this threat as emanating from Pakistan and China, both separately and in combination.

a. With respect to Pakistan, India's goals are to maintain her military superiority, and to encourage the Pakistanis to abandon their challenge to India's primacy in the region. In addition, India seeks to counter Pakistan's successes in obtaining external support against India through (1) preserving and strengthening her own security and diplomatic ties with the USSR, and (2) improving her own relations with Pakistan's main supporters, especially the United States, China and Iran.

b. With respect to China, India seeks to offset the perceived conventional, nuclear and subversive threat from China by gaining continued Soviet military and diplomatic assistance to deter China.

c. With respect to the means for her defense, India wishes to continue receiving outside military assistance, including the most advanced Soviet weapons, until she has reached the point that her own domestic arms production is sufficient for her defense. In this context, the testing of

a nuclear device by India in May 1974 illustrates her unwillingness to be indefinitely dependent on a "nuclear umbrella" provided by other powers.

2. To Secure Her Own Independence, Maintain Her Nonalignment, and Avoid Undue Dependence on Any One Outside Power. The Indians are acutely sensitive to the vulnerability to outside pressures that excessive dependence can bring. They continue to profess a policy of nonalignment and deny that the treaty with the Soviets constitutes an alliance. Thus, they will seek to improve their ties with both the United States and China, while maintaining the support of Moscow. India seeks to advance her outspoken position on certain East-West and North-South issues and preserve her prominence in the councils of the nonaligned, and she hopes to expand her own global influence by promoting the role of such "Third World" forums. With respect to her internal development, India will avoid imitating any outside "models" but will insist on following an Indian path. She will continue to seek to prevent any outside interference with her internal processes.

3. To Insulate the Indian Ocean from Great Power Military Activity. The Indians seek the recognition of a "peace zone" in the Indian Ocean. Their objective is to retain their own military preponderance in the area, and to ensure that no one country, either the United States or the USSR, challenges that superiority.

4. To Promote the Maintenance of Friendly (Preferably Democratic) Governments, Free of Outside Domination, in Neighboring States. In conjunction with the preservation of her own prominence in South Asia, India promotes friendly ties with Sri Lanka and Nepal, strives for improved relations with Pakistan, and seeks to build a special relationship with Bangladesh. The very existence of the latter state, tied to New Delhi through a treaty

relationship, is viewed by the Indians as a now-essential feature of their own security. The August 1975 coup in Dacca, removing the pro-Indian Sheik Mujibur Rahman, was thus perceived in New Delhi as a setback in the struggle to achieve this objective. Recent Indian diplomacy has thus sought to reestablish close ties with the successor regime of General Zia Rahman.

5. To Receive Material Assistance, on the Most Favorable Terms, in the Development of Her Economy. The Indians do not wish to beg for assistance, or to appear to be dependent on outside help; they prefer to view such assistance as a matter of obligation on the part of richer countries. In the sphere of commercial relations, India seeks to develop reliable markets for her own goods, including manufactured goods, while guaranteeing the flow of needed raw materials (including petroleum) and advanced technology into her economy.

A comparison of these two lists suggests points of agreement as well as possible disagreement, and thus may help direct our attention to issues on which influence might be applied.

In the area of security and regional alignments there appear to be, for the moment at least, certain parallels in Indian and Soviet objectives. But there are also certain incompatibilities which raise doubts that the Indo-Soviet relationship will be either permanent or free of tension. Thus, we would expect that the Indians would desire more balance in their relations with the "great-power triangle" than the Soviets would like, and that the Soviets would hope to maintain more balance in their own relations in the subcontinent than the Indians would like. From a comparison of putative objectives, we would expect to find some Indian resentment of the Soviet

Union's attempts to strengthen its influence in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and Soviet nervousness over Indian efforts to improve relations with Peking and Washington. We would expect that the Indians would be suspicious of Soviet-American dealings which appear to be aimed toward a superpower condominium, and specifically that New Delhi would take a different position on superpower activities in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere than would Moscow. We would also expect a more generalized tension arising from India's desires to maximize its freedom of action, minimize its dependency, and build up self-sufficiency in the security field, contrasted with Moscow's desires to construct a reliable anti-China (and "anti-imperialist") security system in Asia, and its opposition to further proliferation of nuclear weapons.

With respect to Soviet and Indian positions on other international issues, there is also a large degree of parallelism, most prominently in the area of opposition to "colonial and neo-colonial" activities in the Third World. But we should expect the Indians to avoid appearances of "following the Soviet lead;" rather, New Delhi will want to stake out its own positions, which--in the case of North-South issues--may well put an "anti-superpower" gloss on the issue. Both New Delhi and Moscow seem to have a certain stake in the maintenance of India's prestige and credentials in the nonaligned world, though a difference of emphasis and purpose can again be expected.

In commercial relations we would expect that both sides would perceive continuing benefits in their strengthened trade ties. The Indians, however, would probably be pressing for Moscow to purchase more Indian manufactured goods and to make available more raw materials and nonproject assistance than the Soviets would like.

And finally, with respect to India's internal development and political processes, we would expect from the lists of objectives that there would be some tension resulting from Soviet propaganda and from efforts to create in India "lobbies" which would pressure the Indian government to move in a more "progressive" direction. Here, New Delhi would probably take greater offense at Soviet tactics than at the general Soviet desire for a "leftist" orientation.

What we have outlined above are only expectations concerning the Soviet-Indian relationship. Our purpose below is to test these expectations by examining concrete cases in which the Soviets have attempted to bring their influence to bear on behalf of their objectives. First, however, we wish to examine some additional aspects of the overall relationship, assessing the resources which the Soviets are able to bring to bear in South Asia, and the degree to which the Indians have manifested responsiveness to and dependence on Soviet activities.

Capabilities. Although a complete appreciation of Soviet capabilities in India must await our analysis of the concrete circumstances in which these capabilities have been mobilized, we will here set forth a list of the variety of capabilities available to the Soviets in the subcontinent.

Pledges of Military Support. In the context of India's security problem, one valuable resource which the Soviets command is the ability to pledge their assistance in the event of an attack on India by a hostile state. The usefulness of this promise is, of course, as great in its deterrence value as in the case of actual hostilities.

Though lacking in specificity and not of a binding nature, such pledges of support could be highly valued by the Indians as they face the prospect

of a joint attack from Pakistan and China. In the face of such a contingency in the summer of 1971--compounded by an American message of non-support in the case of Sino-Indian hostilities--the Indians and Soviets agreed to make a public declaration of Moscow's support. Thus, Article 9 of the Indo-Soviet Treaty, though phrased with ambiguity, further manifested Soviet willingness to pledge assistance to India in order to deter action by China.

Provision of Military Aid. The ability of the Soviet Union to supply advanced weapons and training in their use to the Indian military, as well as to assist India in the development of her domestic defense industry, is an important resource. The value of the Soviet supply relationship is heightened by the fact that the United States--at least until the recent lifting of the arms embargo--had refused to act as an alternative supplier to the Indians. As Prime Minister Desai expressed this point: "If we buy more from the Soviet Union, it is the fault of the Western countries for not selling to us."³

For a period of several years, then, the Soviet Union has been the major supplier of weaponry to India, providing roughly four-fifths of New Delhi's total military imports since 1965. Armed sales in the amount of \$1.365 billion were concluded in the ten-year period ending in 1976. Important for the Indians is the fact that these arms are purchased without the direct expenditure of foreign exchange; rather, they are paid for with Indian exports, through the Soviets' rupee account. On most purchases, 10 percent down payment on delivery is required, with the balance covered by nine or ten year credits at 2 percent interest.

More than half the value of Soviet deliveries to India has consisted of aircraft (primarily MIG-21 and SU-7B fighters) and related production facilities, though the Soviets have also provided T-54 and T-72 tanks, various types of naval vessels, and SA-2 and SA-6 missiles. Almost 2,200 Indian military personnel have trained in the USSR, and an estimated 300 Soviet military technicians were in India during 1976.⁴

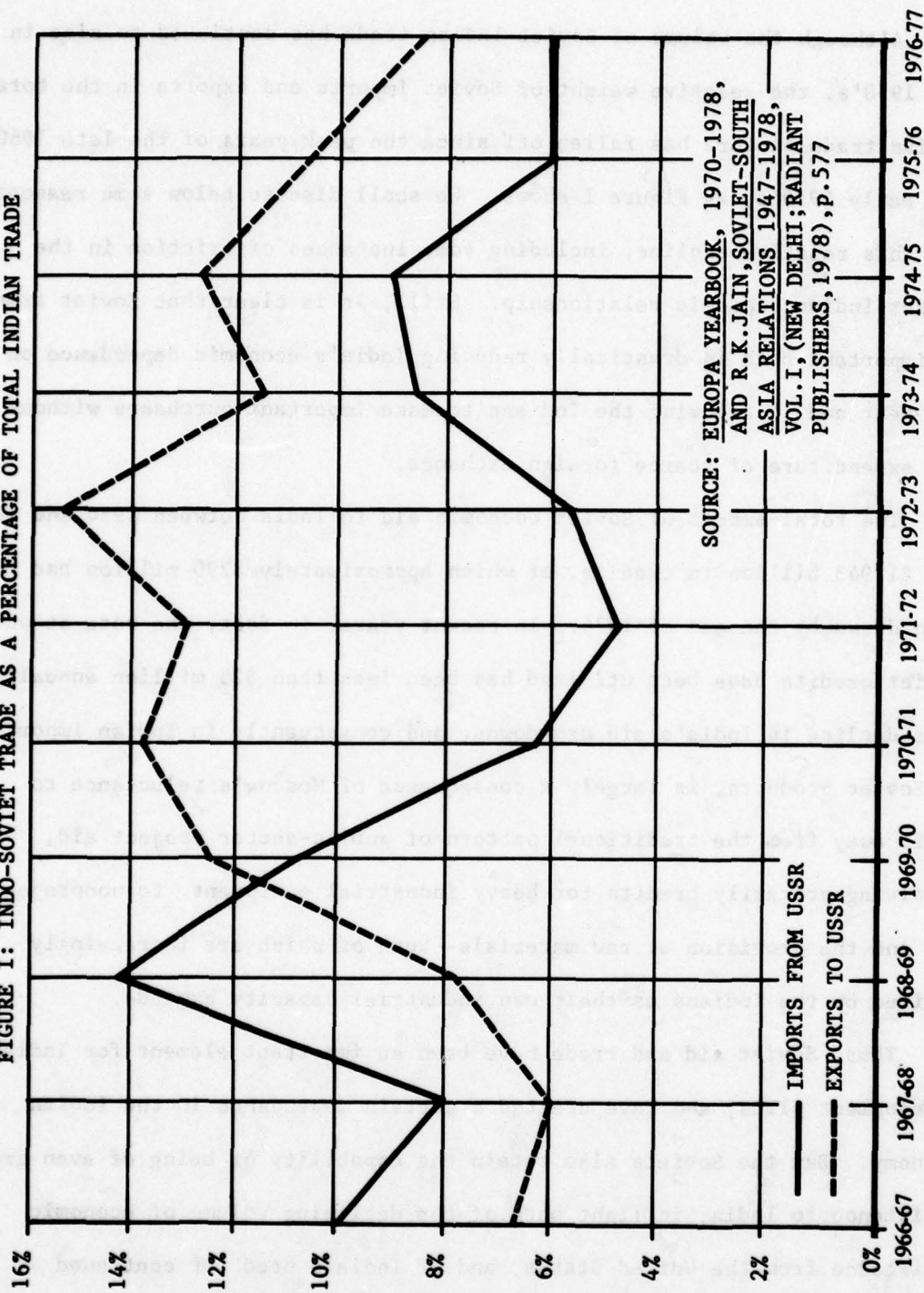
Economic Aid and Trade Resources. The importance to India of the economic resources of the Soviet Union and its East European allies has grown enormously in the last two decades, to the point that Moscow's capabilities in the area of economic assistance and trading arrangements now loom very large in New Delhi's calculations. Between 1950-51 and 1971-72, India's trade with the USSR and Communist East Europe rose from 0.5 percent to 20 percent of her total exports, and from a negligible amount to fully 11 percent of her imports. The Soviet Union itself for the first time in 1970-71 became the largest market for Indian products, with sales that year of almost \$280 million. In 1971-72, India's exports to the Soviet Union fell slightly, but still amounted to \$277.5 million, creating a trade imbalance of almost \$165 million. This trade imbalance almost doubled in 1972-73, as India exported \$406.4 million to the USSR while importing \$265.4 million. Part of this was used by India to repay past economic assistance from Moscow, and part was utilized to purchase Soviet military equipment. But there has still been a net transfer of resources from India to the Soviet Union in recent years--a "negative aid flow" of \$28 million in 1970-71 that climbed quickly to \$165.4 million in 1972-73 and that stood at \$100 million in 1976.

Although the volume of Soviet-Indian trade has continued to rise in the 1970's, the relative weight of Soviet imports and exports in the total Indian trade picture has fallen off since the peak years of the late 1960's and early 1970's, as Figure I shows. We shall discuss below some reasons for this relative decline, including some instances of friction in the Soviet-Indian economic relationship. Still, it is clear that Soviet trade is important both in drastically reducing India's economic dependence on the West and in allowing the Indians to make important purchases without the expenditure of scarce foreign exchange.⁵

The total amount of Soviet economic aid to India between 1954 and 1976 was \$1.943 billion in credits, of which approximately \$290 million had not been drawn by the end of 1976. In recent years, in fact, the rate at which Soviet credits have been utilized has been less than \$25 million annually.⁶ This decline in India's aid drawdowns, and consequently in Indian imports of Soviet products, is largely a consequence of Moscow's reluctance to shift away from the traditional pattern of public-sector project aid, involving primarily credits for heavy industrial equipment, to nonproject aid and the provision of raw materials--both of which are increasingly desired by the Indians as their own industrial capacity expands.

Thus, Soviet aid and trade have been an important element for India's development plans, and have created a certain dependence in the Indian economy. But the Soviets also retain the capability of being of even greater assistance to India, in light both of the declining volume of economic assistance from the United States, and of India's need for continued assistance of a somewhat different composition.

FIGURE I: INDO-SOVIET TRADE AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INDIAN TRADE



Diplomatic Support. In addition to assistance in the military-strategic and economic realms, the Soviets also have the capability to render diplomatic support useful to the government of India. This could take the form of lending their backing to New Delhi in its relations with regional rivals, supporting Indian initiatives in international forums, or--most concretely--lending or withholding a vote (casting a "veto") when issues relating to Indian objectives are considered in the United Nations. The most notable examples of the latter type of support are the Soviet vetoes in the Security Council in support of the Indian position on Kashmir in the 1950's and early 1960's, and the Soviet vetoes cast in 1971 against the Security Council's resolutions calling for an immediate cease-fire in the Indo-Pakistani War.

Propaganda Resources. In its attempt to create favorable attitudes among the Indian people and to direct pressure at the Indian government from internal sources, the Soviet Union has built up a large propaganda effort, which was estimated in 1968 to cost \$15 million annually. One analyst has estimated that one million words per month flow from the Information Department of the Soviet Embassy in New Delhi.⁷ Periodicals or other publications distributed by Communist missions in India had a combined yearly total circulation in 1972 in excess of 23 million. Over two score journals are distributed by the Soviet embassy, compared with less than half that number published by the US Government. In addition, indigenous Communist and pro-Communist newspapers and periodicals taking a pro-Soviet line, many of which are directly or indirectly subsidized by the Soviets, have a circulation of well over 10 million. Radio Moscow and Radio Peace and Progress have in recent years broadcast to India over 125 hours per week.

In the allied area of "cultural activity," powerful assistance to the official Soviet effort is given by the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society (ISCUS), which has over 800 branches and 100,000 members in India. Through these and other auspices, numerous nonofficial exchanges are conducted; for example, in 1971-72 a total of 18 Indian delegations traveled to the Soviet Union and 23 Soviet delegations toured India.

A significant role in this sphere is played by the Communist Party of India (CPI), which voices an undeviating pro-Soviet line. In addition, there are about a dozen Indian branches of international Communist front organizations, all of which contribute to the propaganda effort and serve as pro-Soviet lobbies on the internal Indian political scene. The combined effect of all this activity is a substantial aggregate influence on public opinion.

In light of this rather impressive array of capabilities which the Soviets are able to bring to bear in the pursuit of their objectives in India, it is worth reiterating the point that the skill with which these resources are applied can be important and even a decisive factor in determining the degree of Soviet influence. Apparent advantages brought about by the sheer quantity of resources can be canceled by the ostentatious display of these resources or by a heavy-handed exercise in arm-twisting. Talent is also required in the proper matching of capabilities and objectives. Although the Soviets have in general been sufficiently cautious not to arouse Indian sensitivities, the case studies below will reveal some examples of Soviet capabilities being nullified by a clumsy approach.

Perception of Need. In the military sphere, India relies both upon the expectation of Soviet assistance in the event of an attack from Pakistan and

China, and upon the military equipment which Moscow has proved willing to supply. India's need of Soviet help in this area is accentuated to the extent that she has no alternative source of support or supply. Given the long-standing American arms embargo of the subcontinent and the apparent US decision (as manifested in 1971) to abstain from pledging assistance to India in the event of hostilities with China, India's need of Soviet help became even greater. In fact, there have been occasional indications in the past that India is willing to accede to certain otherwise undesirable aspects of her relationship with Moscow in order not to jeopardize her source of military assistance.

But there are also definite limits to India's defense needs from the Soviet Union. The pledge of Soviet support in the event of attack has already been formalized and proclaimed through the 1971 Indo-Soviet Treaty. In the wake of India's victory in the December war and the breakup of Pakistan--which not only demonstrated her military superiority on the subcontinent but also substantially reduced the immediate threat to her security--India's sense of need has greatly lessened.

India's dependence upon the Soviets for supply of arms is also limited, to the extent that the end of the US embargo and greater availability of foreign exchange now make arms from the West more accessible, and also to the degree that she succeeds in her avowed intention of achieving self-sufficiency in domestic production of military equipment at the earliest possible date.

Economically, India continues to rely upon external assistance. Her available foreign exchange resources remain constricted even though they have expanded in recent years--due largely to homeward remittances from

Indians working in the Persian Gulf countries. As we have seen, a large portion of India's trade has been reoriented toward the Soviet Union and the CMEA bloc, and she will continue to require the imports which she can currently acquire from Communist sources without the expenditure of foreign exchange. She has incurred a massive debt with the Soviets, the repayment of which (due to reach an annual rate of \$325 million by 1980) will require a continued flow of exports to the USSR for many years to come.

Here again, however, there is evidence of a limitation on India's perception of need of the Soviets. Amidst widespread speculation in the mid-1970's, Mrs. Gandhi flatly and publicly denied that India planned to join the Soviet trading bloc. Government trading representatives have in recent years sought to expand India's commercial relations with the EEC, in recognition of India's inability to satisfy her needs through trade in Eastern Europe. There are also obvious limitations to the Soviets' own willingness or ability to greatly expand their commercial and aid relationship with India. Soviet officials and scholars explicitly acknowledge the need for New Delhi to continue to receive economic assistance from non-Communist sources. And the Soviets have proved quite unwilling to adjust certain prices to India's liking or to supply certain raw materials which New Delhi requires. These limitations that make trade expansion difficult were implicitly acknowledged in the joint communique released at the end of Mrs. Gandhi's June 1976 visit to Moscow:

. . . in order to reach the target for the growth of trade laid down in the Indo-Soviet declaration of November 29, 1973 it is essential for the two countries to explore new areas and new modes of cooperation. It was also decided to take measures aimed at expanding the list of commodities for trade.⁸

In the political-diplomatic sphere, although India has had occasional need of a Soviet veto in the Security Council, and though she enjoys the leverage and status that the relationship with Moscow gives her in her dealings with the West and the nonaligned world, the limits of dependence are even more evident. India's determination to retain her independence of action and to preserve her nonaligned credentials underline her sensitivity to political dependence and her desire to maintain a balanced relationship with outside powers, while not undermining her by no means unbeneficial ties with the Soviets.

Even though this attitude was increasingly evident in the final years of Mrs. Gandhi's regime, it was more forcefully articulated by the successor Janata administration. Within an hour of assuming office, Prime Minister Desai declared: "The foreign policy of nonalignment should be fully non-aligned, with no suspicion of alignment with anybody."⁹ In contrast to Mrs. Gandhi, who often spoke of India's "special relationship" to the USSR, Desai insisted that "we won't have special relationships with any other countries."¹⁰ A few months later, his foreign minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, put it more bluntly: "Mrs. Gandhi committed the blunder of making India too much dependent on Soviet Russia. But now . . . a new chapter has opened."¹¹

Not so obvious, but well worth exploring, is the degree to which the Soviet Union "needs" India. For, to the extent that the Soviets feel that they need India as much or more than India needs the USSR, there may well be a reduction in the Soviet potential to exert influence on New Delhi. Thus, the Soviets may well believe that they need India more than India needs them. India's position as the strongest power in South Asia and the

only other mainland Asian power which can act as a counterweight to China creates a lasting Soviet need for Indian support in its effort to contain China. If India were to become hostile or indifferent to the Soviets, Moscow would be left with no major asset in the area. If New Delhi's strained relationship with the United States and China can be judged to be less irreparable than Moscow's own conflict with Peking, then it would appear that India has greater flexibility in its external ties than does the Soviet Union.

The importance of the China factor in shaping Soviet perceptions of India has been sharply underscored in recent months. Sino-Indian relations had been exacerbated in 1974 and 1975 by India's nuclear explosion, her annexation of Sikkim, and China's growing influence in Bangladesh following the anti-Mujib coup. In the summer and fall of 1975 there were reports, ostentatiously reprinted in the Soviet press, of incidents on the long-quietened Sino-Indian border.

Following a border incident in early November, the Soviets apparently sought to offer more than propaganda support to India. The fact that the incident coincided with a second coup d'etat in Bangladesh undoubtedly heightened Moscow's and New Delhi's anxiety that Peking might be seeking to stir up more trouble in the subcontinent. Accordingly, the two sides mounted an unmistakable (but not provocative) display of their mutual resolve. First, Radio Moscow announced on November 19 that, "in accordance with an agreement," a detachment of Soviet ships would be making an "official, friendly visit" to the port of Bombay later in the month.¹² Two days later, it was revealed in New Delhi that an Indian foreign office delegation would be traveling to Moscow to "discuss international developments." Foreign

Secretary Kewal Singh was received by both Gromyko and Kosygin, and the "consultative" meeting was pointedly described by the Soviet press as occurring "in the spirit of the Soviet-Indian treaty."¹³

In 1976, however, relations between Peking and New Delhi showed signs of thaw, as the Chinese began to pursue a more active diplomacy. In January, China suggested that Indo-Soviet diplomatic relations be upgraded, and within six months an Indian ambassador had been dispatched to Peking, ending a 14-year break. Just prior to his departure, Mrs. Gandhi was in Moscow (for her first visit in nearly five years), and though the communique was silent on the question of China, the Indian premier told a press conference in the Soviet capital that "when we discuss the international situation we cannot leave out a country like China, but India's decision to send an ambassador to China will not stand in the way of Indian-Soviet friendship."¹⁴

The movement toward normalization appeared to quicken with the accession of the Janata government. Foreign Minister Vajpayee told an interviewer in October 1977 that "we are willing to take such steps as are necessary to further the process of normalization." Acknowledging that the border dispute would not be easily solved, he stated that the best course would be to "keep it frozen" for the time being, seeking other avenues for establishing trust and then, once the general climate has improved, returning to "more serious problems." Although it was probably of little comfort to listeners in Moscow, he took pains to state that normalization between India and China should not be at the cost of India's friendship with any country.¹⁵

Prime Minister Desai reportedly repeated these assurances to Brezhnev during his visit to the USSR later that month, but the Soviets nevertheless remained nervous. Their worries were doubtless heightened by Vice Premier Teng Hsaio-peng's visits to Burma and Nepal early in 1978, during which he reiterated Peking's hope for better relations with India. Other signs that China was seeking to curb Soviet influence in South Asia, including the expansion of trade ties with India, the dispatch of a delegation to New Delhi for a goodwill visit, and the issuance of an invitation to Vajpayee to visit Peking, prompted Soviet embassy officials to make discreet inquiries of the government regarding the contemplated scope of Sino-Indian normalization.¹⁶

Vajpayee was subjected to a direct exposition of the Soviet concerns during a visit to Moscow--which occurred barely six weeks prior to his scheduled departure for Peking. During a luncheon for the foreign minister, Gromyko delivered the following diatribe:

The aggressive nature of Peking's great-power, hegemonistic policy in recent times is becoming increasingly clear. . . Can one afford to display hesitation on this situation? The schemings by those forces hostile to universal peace and international security in Asia must be rebuffed--and resolutely at that. It is essential that their aggressive designs and expansionist impulses be exposed and brought down in time.¹⁷

As the time for the visit drew nearer, the Soviet press stepped up its campaign to lecture India on the dangers inherent in Peking's courtship. Citing alleged Chinese escalation of "military efforts along India's northern borders" and support to insurgent groups in the northeast, together with its attempt to fan anti-Indian sentiment in Bangladesh and Nepal, an article in Izvestiia concluded that China's interests in "normalization" were motivated solely by a desire to split New Delhi and Moscow:

It is obvious that Peking, making active use of anti-Sovietism in elaborating and implementing its foreign policy actions, would like the normalization of its relations with India to automatically lead to the deterioration of Soviet-Indian relations. Realistic and far-sighted circles in India are alarmed over the fact that these designs by the present leadership are meeting with definite support from certain Indian figures who are actively coming out for 'conciliation' with Peking at all costs, including the undermining of Soviet-Indian friendship and cooperation.¹⁸

Further confirmation of the Soviet sense of need is available.

Through their actions in the 1971 crisis, the Soviets made it clear that the preservation of their relationship with India was more important to them than was their interest in seeking to prevent a potentially destabilizing war in the area. Earlier in the same year, the Soviets had demonstrated that their interest in preserving their ties with the Congress government overrode any potential benefit they might have seen in the victory of an anti-Congress coalition in the Indian parliamentary elections; the Soviets were not interested in change in India if this would bring uncertainty and instability. Brezhnev's direct praise of the Congress Party and its program during his November 27, 1973 speech at the Red Fort rally amounted to Soviet certification of the "progressive" credentials of Mrs. Gandhi's government. This endorsement diminished further the ability of the CPI to criticize as insufficiently radical the ruling party's policies. Brezhnev's statement left some Indian observers concluding that the Soviet stake in Mrs. Gandhi's Congress had heightened, leaving the CPI as a redundant "appendage" in Indian politics.¹⁹

The 1975 political crisis in India, culminating in Mrs. Gandhi's proclamation of emergency rule in June, was initially welcomed (as "opportune and expedient") by the Soviets for its seeming reversal of a mounting

"reactionary" tide. But the period of the emergency freed Mrs. Gandhi of any parliamentary dependence on the CPI, and the harsh restrictions on political freedom limited the capabilities of Communists as well as other parties. Indeed, the CPI soon became a particular target for criticism by Mrs. Gandhi's son, Sanjay, whose growing influence evidently disturbed Moscow. Nevertheless, the election campaign in March 1977, following the lifting of the emergency, saw the Soviet press again supporting Mrs. Gandhi's regime, though not without a tinge of criticism of her domestic policies and anxiety about the possible consequences:

Everything that India has achieved during its 30 years of independence has been directly connected with the Indian National Congress, which has stood at the country's helm for all these years. The six years that have passed since the previous elections also attest to the generally positive results of the ruling party's activities. . . . The state of emergency, which was proclaimed in order to protect the democracy, has maintained India as a progressive factor in the international arena and thus can be viewed as a blow against the designs of imperialism.

In the process of implementing progressive measures under conditions of the state of emergency, certain distortions have occurred. . . . The fact that the reactionaries have taken advantage of blunders in the government's policies without offering anything positive and effective in opposition to these policies indicates that demagoguery is their chief weapon in the election campaign.²⁰

To be sure, Moscow saw no viable alternative to Congress, viewing the opposition Janata Party as "the direct tool of extreme reaction . . . and the defender of the interests of landowners, usurers, and local foreign monopolies." Its foreign policy platform was characterized as opposed to India's traditions, as well as to "such achievements as India's friendship and cooperation" with the USSR.²¹

Mrs. Gandhi's surprising defeat in the elections was attributed by the Soviet press to the "mistakes and excesses" in implementation of the

emergency, the unceremonious interference by Sanjay Gandhi in constitutional processes, the halting of progress toward socio-economic reform, and the Congress' refusal to conclude electoral agreements with the CPI. Pravda quoted the CPI's judgment that the election results were not a rejection of the government's "progressive" foreign and domestic policies. One can read Soviet concurrence into the CPI's pledge to "judge the new government by its deeds" and to "support its correct measures and oppose its mistaken ones."²² Labels of "reactionary" and "demagogue" were hastily dropped from Soviet media references to Prime Minister Desai and his colleagues, and the Soviet premier sent a message of congratulations that expressed "confidence that the traditional relations of friendship and all-round cooperation between the Soviet Union and India would continue to grow and develop in the interest of their peoples, peace and international security."²³

Only a month after the elections, Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko was in New Delhi to assess the new Indian government at first hand. Desai's first foreign policy pronouncement--that the Indo-Soviet treaty "must not come in the way of our friendship with any other state; we won't have special relations with any other country"--had undoubtedly occasioned deep apprehensions in Moscow.

Soviet fears of a sharp reversal in Indian foreign policy were soon allayed, however. The warm sentiments of Gromyko's airport statement--that friendly Indo-Soviet relations "are not a result of transitory circumstances of expediency"--were reciprocated by the Indian leadership.²⁴ And even though the final communique was somewhat more restrained than its predecessors, Gromyko was able to joke on departing that his visit to India had not been as "hot" as expected.²⁵ The Soviet press, elatedly hailing the

"important political results" of the trip, showed its relief that "the high hopes of the imperialist forces that Soviet-Indian relations would deteriorate were not justified."²⁶ Although their worst fears were not realized, Soviet commentators nevertheless continued to assume a cautious--even nervous--stance toward the Desai regime, regarding it as a far less reliable ally than its predecessor. Assessing the Janata government one year after its accession to power, Izvestia signaled its own attitude in the view it ascribed to "Indian commentators"--"a noticeable caution in their assessments and in their forecasts for the future." This, the paper added, was "understandable, for the domestic political situation in India remains complex."²⁷

In part, Moscow's care in avoiding risks to its position in New Delhi may stem from a determination not to jeopardize its sizable economic investment in India. This is not simply a desire not to lose the commercial benefits which accrue from the trade relationship with India, but is also a reflection of the Soviets' recognition that they have to a certain extent invested their own prestige in India's economic development.

Responsiveness. Even prior to the formalization of the Indo-Soviet relationship in 1971, there were signs that the Indian official elite perceived a certain compatibility of interests between their own government and that of the Soviet Union. In March 1969, Mrs. Gandhi told C. L. Sulzberger that "Moscow has shown greater understanding than the West of the mentality and needs of newly freed peoples."²⁸ During and after the 1971 crisis, however, this perception may have been accentuated. Thus, in September 1973, Girilal Jain of the moderate Times of India could write that, unlike the United States, the Soviets had not been in conflict with

the Indian elite's definition of its national interest and world role, and that Moscow had therefore been in a better position to influence events in India.²⁹ Mrs. Gandhi herself indicated in October 1973 that this responsiveness to the Soviets may stem in part from their reluctance to put direct pressure on the government. Stressing the sincerity of Soviet-Indian friendship--and taking an indirect slap at the "strings" on US aid--she said at a foundation-laying ceremony at the Soviet-aided oil refinery at Mathura: "The Russians have never told us that we should do this or that, or that they will not help us if we do not do certain things."³⁰ And even though the successor Janata regime has been more balanced in its pronouncements, it too has on occasion singled out the Russians for special praise. Thus, for example, Foreign Minister Vajpayee told a visiting Soviet parliamentary delegation in April 1978 that through various trials and tests "our country always found the only reliable friend in the Soviet Union alone."³¹

At the level immediately below the top leadership are officials who are even less guarded in their expression of preference for the USSR and their disposition not to take actions that would be irritating to Moscow. A leading Indian newspaper recently described the proclivities of this "Soviet lobby" in the Indian government: "There are some nervous men in India's foreign office who, at the slightest suggestion of Russian displeasure, will send Moscow reassurance of India's undying love."³²

Yet here too emphasis must be placed on the limits to Soviet influence, for there is ample evidence of a determination on the part of the top-level leadership of the Indian government to keep its receptivity within bounds. A lingering suspicion of Soviet intentions seems to coexist with a sense of appreciation for what the Soviets have done for India. That Mrs. Gandhi

herself kept her gratitude to Moscow from producing undue receptivity to Soviet requests was evident in a remark to Sulzberger during another interview, in February 1972: "one of our faults is that we are unable to display gratitude in any tangible sense for anything."³³ There was a discernible cooling of the Indo-Soviet relationship, suggesting a diminished sense of responsiveness on the part of the Indian elite, even prior to the fall of Mrs. Gandhi's government. This may be partly attributable to a shift in the composition of the group of top advisers around the Prime Minister. The death in 1975 of D. P. Dhar, an influential adviser who-- first as Ambassador to the USSR and then as Planning Minister--had long worked for closer links between India and the Soviet Union, and the retirement of P. N. Haksar--another Kashmiri Brahmin whose anti-American instincts were barely disguised--roughly coincided with the rise in influence of the Prime Minister's vociferously anti-Communist son Sanjay.

The weakening of the "Soviet lobby" in the higher reaches of the Indian government was accelerated by the coming to power of the Janata Party, whose leaders had frequently criticized Mrs. Gandhi for her one-sided stance toward the superpowers. Shortly after assuming his office, Foreign Minister Vajpayee declared: "At one time we gave the impression that we were pro-American. Then we gave the impression we were pro-Soviet. There must be a change in which we are genuinely nonaligned."³⁴ Another of his statements (a few months later, to the Lok Sabha) underlined Vajpayee's sensitivity to the importance of India's not being perceived as unduly responsive to one side in the bipolar competition: "If anything we say or do gives rise to the feeling that we have leaned towards a particular bloc and have surrendered our sovereign right of judging issues on their merit, it will be a deviation" from the policy of nonalignment.³⁵

Among the more obscure signs of a relative cooling of the Indo-Soviet relationship in the period following the Janata Party victory are certain formulations of "esoteric communication" contained in the series of joint declarations promulgated on the occasion of high-level visits. Thus, the ritual characterization of the atmosphere of high-level talks, worded as "trust, friendship and mutual understanding" in communiques issued after Brezhnev's 1973 visit to India and Indira Gandhi's 1976 visit to Moscow, was downgraded to "cordiality and mutual understanding" in the declaration issued after Gromyko's 1977 visit to New Delhi and "friendship, cordiality, and mutual understanding" on the occasions of Desai's and Vajpayee's trips to Moscow. Similarly, whereas the two sides had expressed "profound satisfaction" or "deep satisfaction" at the level of their relations in 1973 and 1976, this was expressed merely as "satisfaction" in 1977 and 1978.

A revealing study of the limits to the Soviet impact on the thinking and behavior of the Indian elite was published in April 1973 by Canadian political scientist Stephen Clarkson.³⁶ Based on interviews with 100 Indian officials, journalists, scholars and businessmen conducted during March and April 1972, Clarkson's article concluded that "neither in theory nor in practice have the Soviets had any noticeable impact on the Indian elite's ways of thinking or acting in governmental affairs." This conclusion he found surprising in view of his expectation that there would be considerable Soviet intellectual and policy influence on the Indian elite, given the coincidence between Soviet doctrine and the views of the bulk of Indian intellectuals concerning the importance of national economic independence, the "imperialism" of American foreign policy, and the need for state control of the private sector.

Instead he found warm and even enthusiastic attitudes toward Soviet foreign policy existing side-by-side with great distrust of the political bias of Soviet scholars and the low quality of Soviet writing on these subjects. As he put it, the attitudes of those Indian intellectuals who could a priori be expected to be most familiar with Soviet thinking "can best be presented in three dimensions: little information, low credibility, and poor personal contact." Even among CPI intellectuals he found only "weak" Soviet scholarly influence. Few Indians speak Russian, and the preponderance of Soviet books available in India in English are technical and scientific texts rather than works in political economy.

In sum, Clarkson found "no evidence at all" of any policy spin-off from the excellent economic and diplomatic relations between Moscow and New Delhi. Among the elite there was both "great friendliness" and "underlying distrust." Thus, though attitudes toward the Soviet Union as an international power "are warm and friendly, attitudes toward the Soviet system and ideology are hostile and suspicious."

The regular surveys by the Indian Institute of Public Opinion (IIPO) of public attitudes toward the Soviet Union and the United States enable us to assess the trends in popular responsiveness toward these countries. The IIPO survey is conducted among 1,000 literate adults, randomly selected from the election lists, and evenly distributed among the four largest cities of India. Table I shows the results from recent surveys regarding Indian "feelings" toward the United States and the USSR. As is apparent from the table, the sample population's opinion of the Soviet Union had, as of summer 1972, surpassed the previous post-Tashkent high, while opinion of the United States had sharply declined. (In April 1972, the weighted score of the

TABLE I

RESULTS OF SURVEYS OF INDIAN OPINION OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE USSR

	JUL 1966		JUL 1968		JUL 1970		JUL 1971 ^a		APR 1972		AUG 1972		SEP 1973		APR 1975 ^b		SEP 1976		AUG 1977	
	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR	US	USSR
Very Good Opinion	21	30	14	13	27	10	15	14	2	43	5	44	7	32	7	18	24	35	20	17
Good Opinion	56	56	42	51	39	41	34	45	11	33	19	41	35	47	30	57	43	43	53	52
Neither Good Nor Bad	14	7	23	17	18	25	18	25	16	4	27	9	34	11	26	14	15	12	16	17
Bad Opinion	3	1	7	3	7	11	24	8	32	2	29	2	11	1	19	3	10	1	5	3
Very Bad Opinion	*	*	1	*	2	2	4	1	20	*	15	*	5	1	12	*	1	*	1	2
Don't Know	6	6	13	16	7	11	5	7	19	18	5	4	8	8	6	8	7	9	5	9
Weighted Score	183	207	132	152	157	109	71	138	-80	195	-23	219	88	196	33	176	150	201	169	160

* Negligible

^aThe 1971 survey occurred after the announcement of US continued arms supplies to Pakistan and Nixon's impending visit to China, but before the signing of the Soviet-Indian Treaty.

^bThe 1975 survey followed by two months the announcement that the United States would resume arms sales to Pakistan.

Source: Indian Institute of Public Opinion, Monthly Public Opinion Surveys, XXII, 12 (September 1977), Special Supplement.

United States was even lower than that of the Peoples Republic of China.) A year later, while American popularity had risen sharply, Soviet popularity--slipping slightly--continued to be quite high. The opinion rating of the United States declined again in the spring of 1975, following Washington's announcement of readiness to resume arms sales to the subcontinent. But a year and a half later, the opinion of the United States had improved markedly, returning to pre-1971 levels. And in the August 1977 survey, with the Janata government's return to "true" nonalignment and with the end of the Indochina War and the accession of a Democratic administration in Washington, the United States outscored the Soviet Union in the survey for the first time in over a decade! However, this did not signal a growth in negative opinion toward the USSR; of those surveyed, 77 percent found Indo-Soviet relations "satisfactory," and 60 percent (as compared to 57 percent for the United States) agreed that the "basic interests" of the two countries were in agreement.

Clearly the fluctuations are caused primarily by the international activity--especially as it relates to the subcontinent--of the two superpowers and by the perceived health of bilateral relations; there does not seem to be any correlation between the volume of propaganda activity within India and the public attitude toward either country. What the table does not tell us is the precise effect of public attitudes upon the behavior of the Indian government, i.e., whether the favorable opinion of the Soviet Union is passively "permissive" in nature or whether it can be translated more directly into actual public pressure in favor of a particular foreign policy stance. At the very least, however, we may conclude that Indian public opinion does not stand as an obstacle to the achievement of Soviet influence in India.

We shall now proceed to examine specific instances of Soviet-Indian interaction in the diplomatic, propaganda and economic spheres, in order to arrive at a more precise understanding of the extent of Soviet influence in India.

THE REALM OF DIPLOMACY

Since the days of "personal diplomacy" that characterized the Khrushchev and Nehru eras, the frequency and quality of high-level contacts between Soviet and Indian leaders have had both symbolic and substantive significance. Like their deposed predecessor, the Soviet leaders are known to value the prestige and propaganda benefits which can accompany high-level visitors to Moscow. Although in the first few years of the post-Khrushchev period travel to non-Communist states seemed to be a special responsibility of Prime Minister Kosygin, in the early and mid-1970's his two colleagues in the Soviet "troika" were seen with increasing frequency in non-Communist capitals. Leonid Brezhnev's visit to India in November 1973--his first to an Asian state since becoming CPSU General Secretary in 1964--had special symbolic importance for both sides. Surprisingly, in view of the widely trumpeted "special relationship" between Moscow and New Delhi, it was the first visit of any significance by a top Soviet leader since 1969, and the first personal high-level contact Mrs. Gandhi had had with the Soviets in over two years. On the Soviet side, Brezhnev's visit was accompanied by an unusually heavy volume of publicity in both press and broadcast media.

Table II, in documenting the high-level exchanges which have taken place since the Tashkent Conference, reveals two noteworthy features of high-level Soviet-Indian contact. First, these contacts have certainly been frequent, presenting numerous opportunities for direct negotiations

TABLE II

HIGH-LEVEL VISITS (OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL) BETWEEN SOVIET AND INDIAN LEADERS SINCE THE TASHKENT CONFERENCE

<u>Indians to USSR</u>		<u>Soviets to India</u>	
<u>Highest State and Government</u>		<u>Level Visits</u>	
<u>Official Visits . . . 6</u>		<u>Official Visits . . . 2</u>	
Prime Min. Gandhi	Jul 1966	Prime Min. Kosygin	Jan 1968
Pres. Husain	Jul 1968	Genl. Secy. Brezhnev	Nov 1973
Pres. Giri	Sep 1970		
Prime Min. Gandhi	Sep 1971		
Prime Min. Gandhi	Jun 1976		
Prime Min. Desai	Oct 1977		
<u>Unofficial Visits . . . 6</u>		<u>Unofficial Visits . . . 6</u>	
Prime Min. Gandhi (stopover from US visit)	Apr 1966	Prime Min. Kosygin (for Shastri funeral)	Jan 1966
Pres. Husain (stopover on way to Canada)	Jun 1967	Prime Min. Kosygin (after visit to Pakistan)	Apr 1968
Prime Min. Gandhi (stopover on way to E.Eur.)	Oct 1967	Prime Min. Kosygin (for Husain funeral)	May 1969
Prime Min. Gandhi (for 50th Anniv.celebration)	Nov 1967	Prime Min. Kosygin (stopover on way to Hanoi)	Sep 1969
Prime Min. Gandhi (stopover on way to London)	Jan 1969	Pres. Podgorny (stopover on way to Hanoi)	Oct 1971
Prime Min. Gandhi (stopover on way to UN)	Oct 1970	Pres. Podgorny (stopover on way to Hanoi)	Jun 1972
<u>Foreign Minister</u>		<u>Official Visits . . . 3</u>	
<u>Official Visits . . . 6</u>		A. A. Gromyko	Aug 1971
Swaran Singh	Sep 1967	A. A. Gromyko (with Brezhnev)	Nov 1973
Dinesh Singh	Sep 1969	A. A. Gromyko	Apr 1977
Swaran Singh	Apr 1972		
Swaran Singh	Sep 1974		
Y. B. Chavan (with P. M. Gandhi)	Jun 1976		
A. B. Vajpayee	Sep 1978		
<u>Unofficial Visits . . . 4</u>			
Swaran Singh (on way to UN)	Oct 1970		
Swaran Singh (consultation in crisis)	Jun 1971		
Swaran Singh (for anniv celebration)	Dec 1972		
Swaran Singh (on way to Bulgaria)	Jun 1974		
Y. B. Chavan (on way to Mongolia)	Sep 1976		

TABLE II (cont)

Foreign Secretary/Deputy Foreign MinisterOfficial Visits . . . 6

T. N. Kaul	May 1970
T. N. Kaul	Oct 1970
T. N. Kaul	Sep 1972
Kewal Singh	Nov 1975
J. Mehta (with Desai)	Oct 1977
J. Mehta	May 1978

Official Visits . . . 6

N. Firubin	Mar 1966
N. Firubin	Sep 1966
N. Firubin	Sep 1968
N. Firubin	Jul 1970
N. Firubin	Oct 1971
V. Kuznetsov	Dec 1971

Unofficial Visits . . . 1

T. N. Kaul (stopover)	Jul 1969
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Deputy Prime MinisterOfficial Visits . . . 2

V. Dymshits	Feb 1970
I. V. Arkhipov	May 1976
I. V. Arkhipov	Mar 1978

Defense MinisterOfficial Visits . . . 5

Swaran Singh	Sep 1967
Swaran Singh	Oct 1968
Swaran Singh	Oct 1969
Jagjivan Ram	Jul 1973
Jagjivan Ram	May 1978

Official Visits . . . 2

A. Grechko	Mar 1969
A. Grechko	Feb 1975

Deputy Defense Minister/Chief of StaffOfficial Visits . . . 8

Army Gen. Kumaramangalam	Sep 1966
Army Gen. Manekshaw	Sep 1970
Army Gen. Manekshaw	Feb 1972
Def. Secy. G. Narain	Apr 1974
Adm. Kholi	Oct 1974
Air Marshal Mehra	Dec 1974
Air Marshal Moolgavkar	Nov 1976
Adm. Kursetjee	Jul 1977

Official Visits . . . 9

Marshal Zakharov	Feb 1967
Marshal Kutakhov	Feb 1970
Marshal Kutakhov	Oct 1971
Adm. Gorshkov	Apr 1972
Adm. Gorshkov (with Grechko)	Feb 1975
Adm. Kutakhov (with Grechko)	Feb 1975
Adm. Gorshkov	Dec 1976
Gen. Pavlovskiy	May 1977
Marshal Kutakhov	Mar 1978

among persons at the policymaking level. However, there is a definite imbalance in the exchange at the highest levels: prior to Brezhnev's visit, only one official visit by a member of the Soviet "troika" had taken place since 1966. The Soviet Foreign and Defense Ministers had visited India only once (though Gromyko did accompany Brezhnev) and the Soviet head of state had not paid a single "official" call. Contrasted to this were the two official visits of Mrs. Gandhi to Moscow, two by Indian heads of state, and three each by Indian Foreign and Defense Ministers. With the notable exception of exchanges at the deputy ministerial-chief of staff level, this imbalance has continued through 1978.

Also of note is the relative infrequency of Soviet-Indian contacts in the period immediately after the signing of the 1971 Treaty as compared to the few years preceding it. Of the official and unofficial visits listed in Table II, 23 took place in 1969-71 compared to only 14 in 1972-74. (Curiously, a pending visit to Moscow by Mrs. Gandhi, announced by TASS in July 1974 following Swaran Singh's brief stopover in Moscow, did not materialize for another two years.) This is not in itself evidence of a "cooling" of the relationship. But given the high symbolic value of such contacts in the past, and the confident forecasts of "closer cooperation" which accompanied the Soviet-Indian Treaty, one might have expected differently.

In fact, it may be the case that high-level exchanges become more frequent not in periods of greatest harmony and stability in bilateral relations, but in times of greatest uncertainty and possible strain. Thus, the symbolic value of a high-level visit, in manifesting one state's concern

and attentiveness to another, may be more needed at times when confidence in the strength of mutual relations has been shaken. This hypothesis would seem to be borne out not only by the evidence cited above (contrasting the "alliance-building" phase of 1969-71 to the post-treaty period), but also by the pattern of Indo-Soviet behavior in the uncertain period immediately following the recent change of government in New Delhi. Table II reveals that 10 official "high-level" exchanges occurred in the 18-month period following the Janata victory, compared with only 6 such visits in the preceding year-and-a-half. The point is more amply documented in Table III, which lists Indo-Soviet exchanges, both symbolic and substantive, in the post-election period. Clearly, with a new "cast of characters" in the halls of government in New Delhi, the Soviets were usually active in seeking or accepting opportunities to meet and assess the new Indian counterparts. Indian press speculation that the Soviets will dispatch Brezhnev or Kosygin on an official visit to New Delhi in the winter of 1978-79, in the wake of Vajpayee's visit to China, gives further backing for this understanding of the function of high-level exchanges.

International Forums. The true "influence" of one state upon another in quasi-parliamentary international forums is demonstrated only by instances in which the "influencer" has succeeded in getting the "target" to change its preferred position on a particular issue, or to cling to a position from which it is vacillating. Thus, the Soviets can be said to have influenced India's voting only when they have succeeded, through persuasion or promises, in getting the Indians to vote in a way they would not otherwise have done without the attempt at influence. For this reason, aggregate voting statistics, which indicate merely the proportion of votes on which the positions

TABLE III. OFFICIAL INDO-SOVIET EXCHANGES AND VISITS
April 1977 - October 1978

1977

April	Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko to India
May	Indian Law, Justice and Company Affairs Minister Bhushan to USSR
	Soviet Army General Pavlovskiy (Deputy Defense Minister) to India
July	Indian Information and Broadcasting Minister Advani to USSR
	Indian Naval Chief of Staff Admiral Kursetdjee to USSR
August	Soviet Vice-President of Supreme Soviet Presidium Kholov and Parliamentary Delegation to India
	Indian Janata Party Chief M. Limaye to USSR
October	Indian Prime Minister Desai and Foreign Secretary Mehta to USSR
December	Soviet Naval Vessels - Portcall to Bombay

1978

January	Soviet Ambassador-at-Large (for Indian Ocean Talks) Mendelevich to India
February	Soviet Education Minister Yelyutin to India
March	Soviet Air Marshall Kutakhov to India
	Soviet Vice-Premier Arkhipov to India
April	Soviet Parliamentarian Shitikov and Delegation to India (Soviet Politburo Alternate Member Aliev to India for CPI Congress)
May	Indian Defense Minister Ram to USSR
	Indian Foreign Secretary Mehta to USSR
July	Indian Planning Commissioner Rajadhyaksha to USSR
August	Indian Commerce Minister Dharja to USSR
	Soviet Vice-President of Supreme Soviet Presidium Barkauskas and Parliamentary Delegation to India
	Indian Janata Party Chief Hegde to USSR
September	Indian Foreign Minister Vajpayee to USSR

of two states coincide, must be treated with great caution. The fact that India votes in the same way as the USSR say, 80 percent of the time, in a given year does not necessarily show Soviet influence on India. Rather, any or all of India's votes may result from her own independent calculation of her interests. In fact, in some of these instances, it is likely that the Indians have influenced the Soviets to follow their lead.

Tables IV, V, and VI should be read with the above caution in mind. They have been compiled from Department of State files of votes in the United Nations General Assembly. The years for which data are shown represent the critical period of intense conflict on the subcontinent, during which India was presumably most in need of outside support and assistance. The computer has been programed to report the proportion of votes in each year on which India votes "with the USSR" (and against the United States) and vice versa, as well as the remaining votes on which India has voted either with or against both the United States and USSR (the "no position" column). Table V differs from Table IV in that Indian abstentions have been excluded.

The trends revealed by Tables IV and V are similar, though the percentages of Indian votes "with USSR" and "with US" are higher when abstentions are included in the data base. In both cases there is a sharp increase in the proportion of India's votes with the USSR in 1967 (only part of which is explainable by their similar positions on the Middle Eastern issues that year). This voting similarity then falls off sharply in 1968 and 1969, increases again in 1970, and then declines again in 1971 and 1972. In the latter year, India voted "with USSR" on 43.6 percent of the roll calls (including abstentions), or 21.4 percent when abstentions are

TABLE IV

INDIA'S UNGA VOTING COMPARED TO THAT OF US & USSR 1965-72
(WITH ABSTENTIONS)

YEAR	% "NO POSITION"	% WITH USA	% WITH USSR
1965	34.1	14.6	51.2
1966	37.7	11.3	50.9
1967	23.7	10.5	65.8
1968	33.9	10.7	52.9
1969	37.5	18.0	40.6
1970	28.9	20.8	45.9
1971	37.8	15.3	45.0
1972	38.6	15.0	43.6

NOTE to Tables IV, V, and VI: A "no position" vote is defined as one in which India has voted either with or against both the US and USSR. Thus, Table VI includes only those votes (excluding instances in which India abstained) on which India voted either with one or the other.

TABLE V

INDIA'S UNGA VOTING COMPARED TO THAT OF US & USSR 1965-72
(WITHOUT ABSTENTIONS)

YEAR	% "NO POSITION"	% WITH USA	% WITH USSR
1965	58.5	9.8	31.7
1966	64.2	5.7	30.2
1967	57.9	0.0	42.1
1968	53.7	7.4	36.4
1969	64.1	7.8	24.2
1970	54.1	10.7	30.8
1971	66.3	4.8	26.9
1972	70.5	5.5	21.4

TABLE VI

INDIA'S UNGA VOTING COMPARED TO THAT OF US & USSR 1965-72
(EXCLUDING ABSTENTIONS AND "NO POSITION" VOTES)

YEAR	% WITH USA	% WITH USSR
1965	23.6	76.4
1966	15.8	84.2
1967	0.0	100.0
1968	17.0	83.0
1969	24.5	75.5
1970	25.8	74.2
1971	15.2	84.8
1972	20.4	79.6

excluded. In both tables, the drop in India's voting with the USSR is matched more by an increase in her "no position" votes (with or against both superpowers) than by a noticeable increase in her votes "with US." Indeed, the first column of Table V clearly shows that India has consistently voted more often with or against both the USSR and the United States than she has "with USSR" and that the trend since 1970 has sharply accentuated this tendency.

When only votes on which India voted with either one or the other superpower are considered (Table VI), the level "with USSR" votes is much higher, but the trend is similar: a peak in 1967 (when India votes with the Soviets on all 16 roll calls on which the United States and USSR split) followed by a decline in 1968-70. In this case there is a slight increase in voting "with USSR" in 1971, and then--as in the others--a drop (to 79.6 percent) in 1972.

We can conclude from this only that, although India votes in the General Assembly more often with the USSR than with the United States, there did not seem to be a trend toward closer similarity in Soviet and Indian voting as a result of the 1971 treaty. On the contrary, the peak of similarity occurred in 1967, with greater divergence since that time. At the very least, we can say that India's voting record in the United Nations during this period was hardly that of a "puppet" of the Soviet Union.

As a result of detailed evidence available on a very few specific issues, we are able to make some further limited observations about Indian voting which speak more directly to the question of "true influence," as defined above. In none of the specific cases examined, in which it was

clear that Soviet (or US) pressure was applied, did the Indians shift away from positions at which they had arrived as a result of the calculation of their own interests.

In the case of the UN General Assembly resolution declaring the Indian Ocean to be a "zone of peace," the Soviet and Indian positions diverged in 1971 at the time of the initial vote on this issue. This resolution called upon the great powers to enter into consultations with the littoral states with a view to halting the escalation of their military presence in the Indian Ocean and eliminating bases, military installations, logistical supply facilities, nuclear weapons and any other manifestation of great-power military presence "conceived in the context of great power rivalry." It also called on the permanent members of the Security Council and other maritime powers to enter into consultation with states of the region for the purpose of ensuring that military forces in the area not threaten the sovereignty or territorial integrity of the littoral or hinterland states. Subject to these provisions and to the norms of international law, the right to free and unimpeded access by vessels of all nations would not be abridged.

There are signs that the Soviets originally sought to get India to modify its position on the issue. Indeed, India's behavior in the ad hoc committee has been more cautious and restrained than its initial rhetoric in favor of the "zone of peace" might have led us to expect, making this a possible instance of the application of Soviet influence. But when the resolution supporting establishment of a Peace Zone in the Indian Ocean was presented for another vote in the General Assembly in November 1973, the Indians again voted in favor and both the USSR and the United States abstained.

The Soviets explained at the time of the vote that their reservations about the resolution were grounded in their concern for freedom of navigation, and specifically in their fear that certain scientific and technical missions to be conducted in the Indian Ocean might be jeopardized. But during Brezhnev's visit to New Delhi, they reportedly told the Indians that the continuing Soviet naval presence was necessary in view of American activities in the Indian Ocean, and that once the American fleet was withdrawn the Soviets would do likewise. The two sides did agree to include in their joint declaration a reference to their "readiness to take part, together with all interested states on an equal basis, in the search for a favorable solution of the question of turning the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace," but this formulation was evidently much milder than what the Indians had hoped to get the Soviets to agree to.³⁷

The issue has continued to pose a problem for Soviet diplomacy. Under pressure from India and other states in the region, Moscow has evolved a position which seeks to demonstrate responsiveness while reiterating its rights under international law and focusing attention on "foreign military bases" maintained by other powers. As stated in Pravda in February 1977, the current Soviet position on the "zone of peace" is as follows:

The Soviet Union is prepared to participate with all interested states on an equal basis in the search for a favorable resolution of the question of creating a zone of peace in this region. Needless to say, a solution must not impair the national interests or security of any of the parties. It is obvious that the key question here is the elimination of military bases in the Indian Ocean. . . . In resolving the question of foreign military bases, the Soviet Union would be prepared, together with other powers, to search for ways for a reciprocal reduction in the military activity of nonlittoral states in the Indian Ocean. However, such measures should take full account of the generally recognized norms of international law concerning freedom of navigation in the open sea and the associated

need for business calls at the ports of coastal states, as well as freedom of scientific research.³⁸

Even though it is stated in conditional terms, this Soviet position does represent a modification of Moscow's original stance and thus stands as a likely instance of India's influence on the USSR.

India, in turn, has at times stated its own position in terms that suggest that the exertion of influence on this issue may be mutual rather than one sided. Thus, the statement on the Indian Ocean contained in the joint declaration issued at the conclusion of Mrs. Gandhi's visit to the USSR in June 1976 contains phrases (not present in the 1973 declaration) that seem both to recognize the validity of Soviet objections and to draw a distinction between Soviet and American activities in the region. As expressed in the 1976 declaration, the two sides recognized that the establishment of a "zone of peace" would have to conform to "generally recognized principles of international law"--a formulation the Soviets had long been using--while seemingly focusing solely on "foreign military bases" as the source of the problem. Mrs. Gandhi underlined the latter point at a press conference in Moscow: "There is a difference between ships passing by and a permanent base, especially if it is a nuclear one."³⁹ In the context of India's denunciation of the American action in upgrading the facilities on Diego Garcia, these statements appeared to focus criticism on the American "base" while excusing the Soviet "naval passage."

However, the pronouncements of the Desai government on the issue have appeared to blur this distinction. The communique issued after Desai's visit to Moscow in October 1977 retained the focus on the removal of foreign bases (though it added a concern with preventing "the establishment

of new ones"), but an Indian press agency report of the talks stated the Indian position somewhat more fully:

As far as India was concerned, it would like to see all bases and such military or naval presence as are matters of concern to the littoral states be eliminated.⁴⁰

A few months later, Foreign Minister Vajpayee went even further, in a statement in the Lok Sabha, in shifting the focus of Indian concern to the broader question of superpower naval presence in the Indian Ocean:

The house is fully aware of the government's view that the military presence of the great powers in the Indian Ocean is a cause of tension and insecurity in the area. The concept of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean implies the elimination of the foreign military presence from the area.⁴¹

What this shift in emphasis suggests is that the Soviets have had only temporary success in shifting the brunt of India's verbal criticism away from their own naval activity and toward that of the United States.

Another example of the failure of Soviet influence attempts can be found in the long-standing refusal of the Indian government to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), despite Soviet urgings that it do so. In this case, however, the Soviets evidently have not made a large issue of the Indian refusal to sign, apparently calculating that the issue is not worth the risk that they might spoil their relationship with New Delhi.⁴²

On the whole, then, the evidence would suggest that India's determination to stake out an independent position in defense of her own particular interests strongly outweighs any interest she might have in bending before the pressures of other, more powerful states.

Positions on International Issues. When what is at stake is not even so much as a vote in an international organization or a signature on an international treaty, but merely the contribution of a government statement

on one or another issue in the amorphous international "rhetorical arena," one might expect that influence could be more easily exerted. To what degree in fact have the Soviets succeeded in eliciting from the Indians statements on international issues that they would not likely have issued in the absence of a desire to "go along" with the Russians?

Perhaps the clearest example of an Indian statement which was framed with an eye toward its possible effect in Moscow occurred in 1968, at the time of the Warsaw Pact states' invasion of Czechoslovakia. Yet even this case is ambiguous as a "test" of Soviet influence, since there is no evidence of a direct Soviet attempt to influence the Indian reaction. Moreover, even though the Indian statement was couched in milder terms than the United States would have liked, it could also have been rephrased in a way that would have pleased the Soviets even more. Mrs. Gandhi's apparent compromise was to issue a statement which viewed the events in Prague with a "heavy heart" and "profound concern and anguish." Her statement explicitly took note of India's "close and many-sided" relations with Moscow, which New Delhi wished "to preserve and extend." But, she said, "we cannot but give expression to our anguish at the events in Czechoslovakia." These events she refused to characterize as "aggression," however, and the Indian government instructed its delegate to abstain on the Security Council resolution which sought to "condemn" the Soviet action. This performance, which caused an uproar in the Indian Parliament, clearly demonstrated India's unwillingness in 1968 to jeopardize its relations with the Soviet Union.

The period following the Indo-Soviet Treaty and the 1971 war has been examined carefully for signs of increased Indian government willingness to

pitch its rhetoric in a tone more pleasing to its new treaty partner. Not only have instances of such behavior not been found, but in fact there are signs of increased Indian suspicion of the Soviets during this period, coupled with an apparent desire on the part of India to place itself at a greater distance from Moscow. The most striking example of this to be found in the "rhetorical arena" was Mrs. Gandhi's frequent use during 1972 of the term "big powers" applied equally to both Moscow and Washington. Implying that the Soviet-American summits might amount to a big-power conspiracy to carve out spheres of influence at the expense of smaller powers, she declared during her trip to Canada in June 1973 that "the only safeguard against big-power hegemony is for the smaller nations to stand together." CPI leader Bhupesh Gupta made a scathing attack on Mrs. Gandhi's statement, and the Soviets reportedly were ready to call upon their Indian "friends" to mount a letter-writing campaign in criticism. In light of such a display of "ingratitude" by the Indian government, Moscow was undoubtedly perceiving its influence in New Delhi to be far less than the previous year's events had led it to expect.

Brezhnev probably attempted, during his 1973 visit, to convince Mrs. Gandhi to modify her views concerning Soviet-American detente and the alleged "superpower hegemony." His public utterances on the subject constituted a warm endorsement both of detente and of the new-found American "realism" in world politics. Soviet failure to persuade the Indians on this point was evident from the juxtaposition in the Joint Declaration emerging from the Brezhnev visit of the two sides' individual assessments. A warm and detailed Soviet appraisal of detente, singling out the "great importance" of the Soviet-American agreement on the prevention of nuclear

war, was followed by a particularly circumspect Indian appraisal, which characterized Mrs. Gandhi as welcoming the relaxation of tension between the USSR and the United States "since this step facilitates an easing of world tension." Kuldip Nayar, reporting in The Statesman about the Soviet-Indian haggling on this point, concluded that there was nothing in the declaration "to contradict the view that the superpowers were seeking to carve the world into spheres of influence." He added, however, that "the way the Soviet delegation pleaded the case of even the USA has left India with the impression that the Moscow-Washington understanding is deeper than is imagined."⁴³

An Asian "Collective Security System." Ever since Leonid Brezhnev declared in June 1969 that "the course of events is putting on the agenda the task of creating a system of collective security in Asia," this scheme has served as the centerpiece of Moscow's diplomacy in Asia.

The Soviets could not have been overly encouraged by India's initial reactions to the Brezhnev proposal. New Delhi did not explicitly endorse the Soviet scheme, nor did it offer an immediate rebuff. Mrs. Gandhi's first public reaction put the most benevolent face possible on the Soviet plan: she said that she felt the Russians were more interested in economic cooperation, to which India was not averse, than in a military alliance. In September 1969, Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh issued a statement which appeared to be more forthcoming. But he appeared to backtrack in December, when he said that his government did not believe in the notion of big powers acting as the guardian of security for India or her neighbors. Similarly cold reactions from the Indonesians and the Japanese in 1969 led to a temporary shelving of the proposal by Moscow.

But Soviet talk of Asian collective security was vigorously renewed in the wake of the Indo-Soviet treaty, which the Soviet press implied could become the first step in the creation of such a system. There were vague signs in the months following the conclusion of the treaty that the Indians might be willing to take a more active role in helping to promote the Soviet proposal. During a visit to Moscow in April 1972, Foreign Minister Swaran Singh gave an interview to the Soviet journal New Times in which he termed the Soviet idea for collective security system "good" and asserted that the idea would in time assume a concrete form.⁴⁴ That these expectations were not borne out may well be a product of the above-mentioned Indian suspicion of "hegemonial plans of the big powers" in the wake of the 1972 Moscow summit. But whatever the cause and despite the fact that the Soviet leadership and media have been pressing the issue with greater frequency and urgency, there has been no evidence of coordinated Soviet-Indian activity on behalf of the Asian collective security plan, nor has the project elicited any additional verbal endorsement from the Indians.

During his November visit, Brezhnev expounded at length before the Indian Parliament his views on the merits of "collective security" in Asia. But again, no explicit Indian endorsement of the concept was forthcoming. India was willing, however, to include in the Joint Declaration a call for "broad development of mutually advantageous cooperation and the consolidation of peace and stability in Asia, based on joint efforts by all the states" of the region. In this context, the two governments subscribed to a list of principles for interstate relations whose wording was almost identical to the list enunciated by Brezhnev in his March 1972 explication of the proposed "system of collective security in Asia." Despite

this apparent concession by the Indians, their refusal to give explicit approval to the Soviet proposal amounted to a striking failure of Soviet influence in New Delhi.

In 1976, as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe approached its climax, the USSR again devoted special emphasis to the notion of extending "collective security" to Asia. Stressing the lengthy and incremental nature of such a process, Izvestia declared that "one could imagine" that it could take shape "by means of bilateral or multi-lateral agreements between Asian countries based on the principles of peaceful coexistence."⁴⁵ India was one of the countries cited by the Soviet press as having "evaluated positively" the "Soviet idea of making Asia a continent of lasting peace. . . ."⁴⁶ And yet the joint declaration issued following Mrs. Gandhi's visit to Moscow in June 1976 was no more forthcoming toward the Soviet proposal than the Gandhi-Brezhnev declaration of 1973 had been. In fact, Mrs. Gandhi appeared to throw more cold water on the Soviet proposal by means of her skillful evasiveness at a Moscow press conference:

A correspondent asked about holding an Asian conference on security similar to the Helsinki conference. The Prime Minister said the problems of Asia are exceedingly complex. Everything should be done to see that there is greater stability. . . . She pointed out that security depends on many factors. To us, the most important factor now is stability with economic strength. Bilateral and multi-lateral economic cooperation is the best way to ensure stability.⁴⁷

As expected, the formulations endorsed by the Janata regime have been no more responsive to the Soviet interests. In fact, the declarations signed by Desai in 1977 and Vajpayee in 1978 have tampered with the wording of Brezhnev's formula-list of "principles of interstate relations" on which

Asian collective security is supposed to be based; the September 1978 statement went so far as to place first a phrase not found in Brezhnev's list: "the right of each people to choose its own political system."

The Indo-Pakistani Conflict and the Indo-Soviet Treaty. Through the early 1960's, Moscow's interests in preventing the United States from building a solid anti-Communist phalanx in South Asia had been served by the policy of endorsing the Indian stand on Kashmir and facilitating the continuation of the Indo-Pakistani rivalry. But by 1965 the locus of the main threat to the Soviet Union had shifted and Kashmir had become a thorn in the Soviet side. The Soviets shifted to a neutral stance on the Kashmir issue (not budging from it since), and they sought to reconcile India and Pakistan in order to enlist their common cooperation in the containment of Chinese influence and expansion in Asia.

In the wake of Tashkent, the Soviets sought to further improve their relations with Pakistan--still an ally of the United States and one of Peking's closest friends--without loosening their ties with India. They thus hoped to win acceptability from both sides and thereby enhance their great-power role in South Asia. But the announcement in the summer of 1968 that the USSR would sell arms to Pakistan put a marked strain on Soviet-Indian relations. This episode provided some insight into both the degree of influence Moscow and New Delhi had with each other and the extent of their mutual need at that time.

By the end of 1970 the Soviets had, however, become disenchanted in their dealings with Pakistan and discouraged at the prospects of replacing Chinese influence in Pakistan with their own, and they had informed the Indians that they intended to sell no more arms to Pakistan. But Moscow's

disillusionment was not so great as to allow the Soviets to take pleasure from the mounting internal turmoil in Pakistan. Press articles condemned "ultra-left" and "Pekingite" forces for advocating an armed anticapitalist struggle in Pakistan. Such radical demands were said to "objectively aid" reactionary forces by narrowing the united front. These articles made clear that while internal change in Pakistan was the Soviets' objective, they preferred less destabilizing means of bringing it about.⁴⁸

The immensely destabilizing and enervating conflict which broke out in East Pakistan in March 1971 evoked a stern message of official concern from the Soviets. On April 2, President Podgorny requested that Yahya Khan "take the most urgent measures to stop the bloodshed and repressions against the population in East Pakistan" and work toward peaceful resolution of the conflicts.⁴⁹ This message, especially when contrasted with Washington's caution in its own public statements on the crisis, had an immensely favorable impact in India, where it received wide press coverage.

There were close consultations between Soviet and Indian officials during this period, but the thrust of the Soviet message to New Delhi was to urge India's circumspection and to suggest that India should not be the first nation to recognize the independence of East Pakistan. In June, with both the refugee burden and public pressure on the Indian government mounting, Swaran Singh flew to Moscow for consultations. During his visit, Premier Kosygin urged in a public speech that steps for safe and secure return of refugees from East Pakistan be taken without delay, adding that the "Tashkent way" remained a sound basis for settlement of Indo-Pakistani problems. In apparent deference to the Indians, this latter assertion was omitted from Pravda's version of the speech. Moreover, the Indians

reportedly refused to allow any mention of Tashkent in the joint statement issuing from Swaran Singh's visit, saying that such a reference would imply joint Indo-Pakistani culpability for the crisis. The Soviets acceded to this demand, and by the following month the Soviet press, in what amounted to a wistful epitaph for the "spirit of Tashkent," was asserting that the method of direct negotiations between the two sides "has justified itself until recently."⁵⁰

The Indian government's perceived sense of "need" of the Soviets was clearly high at this point, and the Soviets were seeking to utilize this in their effort to encourage New Delhi not to take action which might precipitate a military conflict. The objectives of both sides were served by the conclusion of the Indo-Soviet Treaty in August 1971.

For the Indians, the pressures of the crisis in Pakistan were an important factor motivating the revival of the idea of a treaty (discussions about which had actually begun two years before). Another important element in the calculations of both sides was the revelation by President Nixon in July that Henry Kissinger had traveled to Peking to arrange a visit by Nixon in 1972. A detail of special interest to the Indians was Pakistan's role in facilitating Kissinger's secret journey. Thus, with the cooperation of India's sworn enemy, the American President was making overtures for a new relationship with China, India's second major antagonist in Asia. In its two wars in the 1960's, India had enjoyed first the support and assistance of the United States against China and then its strict neutrality in the 1965 war with Pakistan. As India faced the prospect of another round with Pakistan--supported by China--in 1971, could she count again even on American neutrality? According to the New York Times of

November 30, 1971, Kissinger had reportedly warned Mrs. Gandhi in the summer that China might not remain aloof from a war in the subcontinent, and that the United States might not give its support as it had in 1962. In this context, the public promise of Soviet support was particularly welcome in India.

The Soviets, no less concerned over the prospect of a Sino-American rapprochement, saw India's dilemma as an opportunity both to gain influence in New Delhi and to deter another enervating conflict in the subcontinent. A large-scale Indo-Pakistani war could only intensify the drain on India's resources, thus likely wasting not only the Soviet economic investment in India, but substantial Soviet arms investments in the belligerent countries as well. According to Novoe Vremya, the only gainers from such a conflict would be those "forces beyond their borders that are striving to damage India and Pakistan by pursuing their own definite political purposes."⁵¹ The formal linkage of Soviet and Indian interests by means of a treaty might succeed in deterring the Chinese from providing military backing for Pakistan and also place additional pressure on Yahya Khan to reach a political solution in East Pakistan, thus allowing the removal of the refugee burden from India.

The treaty itself cost the Soviet Union very little. What little influence the USSR had in Pakistan had already been lessened by what Yahya considered meddlesome Soviet statements concerning Pakistan's "internal affairs." That the Soviets intended nonetheless to try to minimize the treaty's alienating effect on Pakistan was evident both from the absence in the joint Soviet-Indian communique accompanying the treaty of any reference to an independent Bangladesh, and from the repeated assurances

by the Soviets that the treaty was directed against no third party. The Pakistani Foreign Secretary traveled to Moscow in September, probably to receive further such assurance in private.

The actual obligations the Soviets incurred from the treaty were minimal. Apart from pledges to strengthen economic, scientific and cultural cooperation, and to continue regular contacts on international problems, each party to the treaty promised: (1) not to enter into any alliance or commit any aggression directed against the other (Article 8); (2) not to undertake any commitment incompatible with the treaty (Article 10); and (3) in the event of an attack or threat directed toward either by a third party, to "immediately start mutual consultations with a view to eliminating this threat" (Article 9).

In short, the treaty's main purpose, from the Soviet point of view, was to formalize and extend Russian influence for the immediate end of stabilizing the situation in South Asia, both by deterring the Pakistanis and their Chinese patrons, and--declaring in advance the Soviet position--by providing a psychological crutch to the Indians designed to forestall an emotional drift toward recognition of Bangladesh and consequent war on the part of New Delhi. Technically, the Soviets were under no greater obligation to give material assistance to India in case of attack than they had been prior to the treaty's signing.

India, on the other hand, though she had not denied herself the option of unilateral military action against Pakistan, had solemnly declared her intention to consult the Soviets in the event of any threatened attack, thus formalizing and displaying for the benefit of third parties the strong Soviet interest in subcontinent affairs.

Of course, the interpretation placed upon the treaty by Mrs. Gandhi's government was that it served to strengthen India's traditional policy of nonalignment, and indeed the treaty formally notes the Soviet "respect" for that policy. (A Pravda editorial, commenting further on the Soviets' "great respect" for Indian nonalignment, added--in a novel interpretation of the meaning of that policy, "India invariably shows understanding and support for the peaceful Soviet foreign policy."⁵²) The Indian position that the Treaty was not inconsistent with its nonaligned stance was given tacit approval in October during the visit of President Tito, who was reported to have expressed "full understanding" of the need for the treaty to have found it fully in accordance with the principles of nonalignment.

The official Indian view of the advantages brought by the Treaty stressed not only the deterrence of hostile powers through Soviet support, but also a gain in India's credibility and flexibility in the world. Soviet support of India's positions on Bangladesh and Kashmir were said to be assured, and Article 10 was read in New Delhi as prohibiting further Soviet supply of arms to Pakistan.

The Soviets proceeded in the wake of the Treaty to try to utilize their new-found leverage with India in order to urge India not to take actions which might lead her into war. Mrs. Gandhi made an official visit to Moscow in late September for consultations with Kosygin, Brezhnev and Podgorny. The Soviets probably viewed the final communique of the visit as a victory for their policy of restraint. Both sides announced that they would seek "urgent measures" to reach a political solution "with due regard to the wishes, the inalienable rights and lawful interests of the people of East Pakistan." (Notably, the Indian version referred to

"East Bengal.") The Soviet side "took into account" Mrs. Gandhi's statement of India's determination "to take all necessary measures to stop the inflow of refugees" and to ensure their speedy return. While the Soviets would do everything possible to maintain peace on the subcontinent, they "expected" from Islamabad an early political settlement of the crisis.⁵³ In return for the relatively restrained posture adopted by India, the Soviets reportedly promised to supply more economic aid to India and to establish a larger aid mission in the country. Moscow, however, was to be consulted on all aspects of India's economic and industrial development.

Articles in the Soviet press in October grew steadily more critical of Pakistan's policies. Yet there were still limits on how far the Soviets were willing to go, as was evident from one author's call for a settlement based not only on the "will and interests" of the East Pakistanis, but also on "respect for Pakistan's territorial integrity." The major thrust of the Soviet press commentary was still on the need to avoid war on the subcontinent. The Soviets continued to put great pressure on India to refrain from committing herself to full independence for Bangladesh. Swaran Singh publicly acceded to the Soviet-backed position in an October 8 statement that India did not regard sovereign independence as necessarily the only solution for the Bangladesh problem. According to a Western observer, "the Indian government evidently adopted this position unwillingly, in the face of heavy pressure from their Russian ally. . . ." ⁵⁴

As the level of tension rose, Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Firyubin arrived (without invitation) in India on October 22 for six days of talks which were pointedly labeled as being in accordance with the obligation for "consultations" stated in Article 9 of the treaty. Reportedly, Firyubin

used the occasion to lecture the Indians on the need to avoid war, though by this time both India and Pakistan were fully mobilized on the western front.

But for further demonstrative effect, to reinforce the message that the two sides were consulting on "effective measures" to remove the threat, Soviet Air Marshal Kutakhov arrived in New Delhi for a six-day visit shortly after Firyubin's departure. Moreover, in the period between August and the end of November, eight shiploads of Soviet arms were reported to have arrived in India.⁵⁵ A Soviet airlift brought additional arms to India. Clearly, though the Soviets were publicly counseling against war, they were protecting their relationship by ensuring that India would be well-armed should it find a military solution necessary.

The Soviet provision of military and diplomatic support to India during the December war proved of great value. In the latter sphere, Ambassador Malik used his vetoes in the Security Council to block cease-fire resolutions while the Indians completed their military operations in East Pakistan. Yet even during the warfare, the Soviets were apparently pressing their influence in order to restrain New Delhi.

The Soviet position in the aftermath of the December war was anomalous. Though they had failed to bring about the removal of the refugee burden from India by peaceful means, they had at least played a major role in India's victory, while their American and Chinese rivals had both lined up on the side of the loser. They might well have expected India's gratitude to produce even greater Soviet influence in New Delhi. But, as Mrs. Gandhi had admitted, the Indians have difficulty in showing gratitude. Ironically, the Soviets, by helping India to eliminate an effective military threat

from their main antagonist of nearly a quarter of a century, had thereby reduced India's need of the Soviets and with it, perhaps, chances of enlarging the Soviet potential for influence. A militarily stronger and more confident India might prove to be a mixed blessing for Moscow.

On the other hand, though the Soviets set about attempting to rebuild their relations with Pakistan so as not to leave it to the exclusive blandishments of Washington and Peking, the Soviets now probably needed India more than ever, for she had become an even more valuable asset in the effort to outflank China. In addition, Moscow faced great risks in its increased involvement on the subcontinent. As the Soviet press acknowledged, the Chinese might well be more involved than ever in sponsoring separatist movements in both India and Bangladesh. The Soviets were likely to be faced with a greater burden of both military and economic aid in an area in which prospects for stability had by no means been enhanced. But there seemed to be no alternative open to the Soviet Union but to shoulder the greater burden as the price for the hoped-for greater influence, for the maintenance of this influence still seemed to require that the Soviets seek stability in South Asia.

In 1972, Soviet influence--which had succeeded in delaying but not in preventing war on the subcontinent--was applied to the effort to achieve a reconciliation among the states of the subcontinent. Whatever the effect of Moscow's pressure in facilitating it, the Simla Agreement of July certainly suited Soviet purposes. And Soviet expressions of joy were repeated in August 1973, when the New Delhi agreement on three-way repatriation appeared to bring the subcontinent further along the path of stability.⁵⁶

But the frequent citations in the Soviet press of the benevolent effects of the Indo-Soviet Treaty upon this process have not called forth equivalent kudoos from Indian officials. Indeed, a content analysis of Soviet and Indian statements concerning the treaty adds further support to the hypothesis that India's perception of her need of the Soviet Union has been declining at the same time that the Soviet sense of need of the Indians was rising.

On the second anniversary of the treaty Indian officials issued only pro forma statements and the Indian press gave only a restrained notice of the anniversary, despite determined efforts by the Soviet Embassy and TASS to generate comment. The Soviet press and radio, by contrast, were full of warm (but not euphoric) salutes to the Treaty. There was no officially sponsored commemoration of the anniversary in India, and Mrs. Gandhi reportedly refused to travel to Moscow for the benefit of holding such a celebration there. The Soviets had to be content with Congress President S. D. Sharma as the guest of honor. In a message to the Soviets, which was barely noticed by the Indian press, Mrs. Gandhi said that the treaty "contributes in its own way to the fostering of a general climate of peace and understanding." She looked forward to "greater economic and cultural interchange to mutual advantage" and noted that "major initiatives for international peace" had been taken by the USSR.⁵⁷

But in two newspaper interviews given earlier in the year, Mrs. Gandhi made a clear attempt to play down the significance of the treaty with the USSR. Denying that India was "in the Soviet clutches," she told Kuldip Nayar of the Statesman that "it is just a friendship treaty; it does not affect our policy." In an interview with the Japanese newspaper Ashai, she

termed the statement that India had won its war with Pakistan "thanks to Soviet support" as "completely erroneous. India did not receive any support from the Soviet Union except moral support" and it was "not correct" to say "that India was supported more by the Soviet Union than by other countries." She declared that India had signed "similar treaties" with other countries, citing political and economic treaties with the United States, Japan and Sweden as examples. The treaty with Moscow "is aimed at cementing friendship with the Soviet Union, but that does not provide the Soviet Union with any special privileges. India is not hindered at all by this treaty or the Soviet-Indian joint economic committee from making independent judgments" and has "no intention . . . of being subservient to the policy of any other country."

In subsequent years, one continues to observe a striking contrast between India's effort to play down the symbolic importance of the treaty and the frequent Soviet efforts to the contrary. The determination of the Janata government to avoid imputing a "special" quality to the Indo-Soviet relationship was again evidenced in the references to the treaty. In the joint declarations issued on occasions of high-level visits, the Gandhi government had agreed to a formulation which stressed the "exceptional importance of the treaty" and which asserted that Indo-Soviet relations, "based" on the treaty, were a "major factor in strengthening peace and stability in Asia and throughout the world." By contrast, the communique issued after Desai's 1977 visit declared that "cooperation . . . in the spirit of the 1971 treaty" and "based on equality and mutual respect" was "making a considerable contribution toward strengthening peace and mutual understanding between all states" and "does not hamper in any way the

development of their relations with third countries, aimed at achieving the same aims. . . ." Not only did this formulation avoid the previous association of the Indo-Soviet Treaty with the process of pacifying and stabilizing Asia, but it also stoutly reasserted India's diplomatic freedom of action. Clearly the Soviets, finding neither implication suited to their own interests, would have preferred the earlier language--indeed, they continue to use it in their unilateral pronouncements. Whether they unsuccessfully pressed the point or simply chose to defer to Desai's wishes is not as important as the fact that yet another sign of Moscow's special importance to India had disappeared.

ISSUES IN INDO-SOVIET BILATERAL RELATIONS

The degree of mutual responsiveness in the Soviet-Indian relationship and the extent to which either side can exert influence over the other can be clarified further by a closer examination of the quality of their bilateral dealings. This section begins with an exploration of two issues which have proved controversial over a number of years and on which ample documentation exists.

Soviet Maps of the Sino-Indian Border. An analysis of the attitudes that New Delhi and Moscow have assumed regarding their respective territorial conflicts with Peking is instructive. India, for its part, expressed its support for the Soviet position in the wake of the worst of the border clashes between the USSR and China in March 1969.

But great misgivings about Moscow's own position were aroused soon afterward in India by the symbolic but sensitive question of the manner in which Soviet maps delineated the Sino-Indian border. During the last week of April 1969, the Soviet crew of a Russian helicopter brought to

India for demonstration refused to make a planned flight in the NEFA, claiming that their maps showed this territory to be part of China. The Indian press picked up the story, occasioning a public outcry of protest. The Soviets fired the controversy anew that summer with the publication of a volume of the new edition of the Large Soviet Encyclopedia which showed the NEFA and Aksai Chin as totally Chinese. Responding to a parliamentary protest of this latest "cartographic aggression" by Moscow, Foreign Minister Swaran Singh declared that no Soviet map had ever showed the Sino-Indian border correctly, and frequent Soviet assurances that a correction would be issued had never been honored. He told the parliament that he did not accept Soviet protestations that their maps did not represent their political views.

Later in the month, in assuring opposition leaders that India would continue to press the issue, Mrs. Gandhi revealed that written representations had been delivered to the Soviets in 1956, 1958, 1966, and 1968. At the same time, she took pains to mention that "some other" governments and the United Nations had also published maps depicting the boundary incorrectly.

But it was the same map, rather than a "corrected" version, which appeared in an edition of the Soviet encyclopedia which was published in the West in May 1972. For the first time since the Indo-Soviet treaty, the issue was again brought before the parliament by opposition parties. This time, Swaran Singh stated merely that the GOI was "seeking further details" from the Soviets, though he added that the government would continue to press the Soviets to follow up, by the publication of new maps, their assurances that such erroneous maps did not affect the Soviet respect for India's frontiers.

It was only in late 1972, amid talk in New Delhi of an approach toward improvement of relations with Peking, that the Soviets finally publicly acknowledged the correctness of the Indian territorial position. An article in the limited circulation journal Problemy Dalnego Vostoka (Problems of the Far East) on "Peking's Political Machinations on the Indian Subcontinent," clearly intended to emphasize the severity of the gulf between Peking and New Delhi, noted that the Chinese had laid claim "to considerable sectors of Indian territory," specifying 33,000 square kilometers in the western sector, 2,500 in the central sector, and 10,000 in the east. Incredibly, the author had the temerity to criticize the Chinese for their practice of publishing "old Kuomintang maps which they had not had time to revise" and which showed the border with India "differently from how it actually existed."⁵⁸

Nevertheless, the Soviets have not yet revised their own maps to coincide with India's claims. At best, they have labeled the disputed territory "undecided" or obscured it altogether. In the meantime, angry inquiries continue to be made in the Indian Parliament. One of the latest in a long line of reassuring government explanations of the situation occurred in August 1978, in the midst of renewed signs of Sino-Indian normalization:

The foreign minister [Vajpayee] also told the house that the Soviet Union had informed India that the Sino-Indian border in Soviet publications would in future more closely correspond to borders represented in Indian maps. We have yet to see the new maps, but we have been informed that the border in the western sector will be delineated by the conventional sign of an unestablished border. But in the middle sector and eastern sector the new delineation will correspond with our own, he said.⁵⁹

Several important points are revealed by the lengthy course of the Indo-Soviet map controversy. The first, of course, is the long-standing imperviousness of the Soviets to Indian protests on the matter. For all the Soviet excuses about technical problems, the Indians clearly gave the Soviets ample opportunity to quiet their anxieties merely through the publication of a revised map. The Soviet failure to do so tells us something about the strength of New Delhi's influence in Moscow, and it points to the conclusion that Moscow must have been deliberately stirring the Indians' anxiety in order to heighten their sense of "need" of Soviet support. Second, the manner in which the Indian government has handled the matter is also instructive. New Delhi has clearly preferred to keep the issue at low profile, hoping to fend off parliamentary notice of the persisting Soviet practice. And, during certain occasions of public controversy on the matter, government spokesmen have not only echoed the Soviet line about "technical difficulties" but have sought to find examples of "incorrect" maps published by other powers in order to take the critical heat off their failure to bring an end to the Soviet "cartographic aggression."

Finally, there is significance in the fact that the Soviet Union finally did make verbal acknowledgment of the "correct" delineation of the Sino-Indian border only after Swaran Singh had suggested (in November 1972) that a rapprochement might be in the cards. After years of standoffish behavior on the border issue, that the Soviets would move to the position of publicly pressing the Indian claims is yet another signal of a growing Soviet anxiety, in the wake of the 1971 crisis, that the Indians might actually need Moscow less than the Soviets themselves need India.

The Soviet "Cultural Center" in Trivandrum. Another long-standing "hot potato" in Indo-Soviet relations arose from a unilateral attempt by the Soviets to expand their presence in India. Since 1954, the Indian government had followed a policy of disallowing official establishments of foreign governments in places other than four cities where consular offices were permitted. An exception had been made in the case of four US information centers which had been established in nonconsular locations prior to the change in regulations.

In June 1969, the Soviets had approached the Indian foreign ministry for permission to build a cultural center in Trivandrum (Kerala), where there were no consular offices. Even though Indian policy clearly prohibited such a move, the Soviets were told that their request would be examined. In apparent "anticipation of permission," the Soviets attempted to present the Indian government with a fait accompli by beginning the construction of the \$1 million center.

The matter came to public attention in dramatic fashion on December 11, 1969, when some Indian workers were killed in a construction accident on the Trivandrum site. In response to a parliamentary protest, Foreign Minister Dinesh Singh termed the matter a "misunderstanding" and declared that the whole question would be examined.

To compensate for its embarrassment, and in apparent response to the pressure from the Soviets and the anticipated pressure from domestic sources, the foreign minister sent a circular note to big-power embassies (in alphabetical order, though only the US centers were affected by the order) demanding that officially-sponsored centers outside consular locations be closed. Explaining the decision in parliament, Dinesh Singh and

his deputy denied that they were responding to Soviet pressure. The Trivandrum incident, they said, had simply provoked a review of official policy and an investigation of the activities of these centers. Although the American centers were not officially named, they charged that this review had disclosed the existence of improper activities. After negotiations had been conducted during the spring and summer of 1970 the United States finally decided that, rather than comply with the new Indian regulations requiring that the affected centers be under the direction of Indian nationals, it would close the extra-consular cultural centers.

The conclusions that can be drawn from this protracted incident are necessarily mixed. The government of India did agree, under Soviet pressure, to end a policy which had shown apparent discrimination in favor of the United States. It should be noted, however, that this action would likely have been taken at some point, even had the Trivandrum incident never occurred, though it might have been handled in a less clumsy fashion. Definite limits on the Soviet ability to influence the Indians are revealed, on the other hand, by their inability to win an easy victory in their attempt, following the closure of the US centers, to gain special privileges in the operation of their own cultural center.

In fact, to cite yet a third case, the Soviets have more recently failed even to win Indian agreement to a joint Indo-Soviet effort in maritime cooperation. The Moscow-proposed agreement would have called for the Soviet Union to provide crews, trawlers and other equipment for deep-sea fishing in return for Indian provision of port facilities. On Indian insistence, a provision was added ensuring that the crew in every trawler would have Indian members as well--perhaps to ensure that the fleet would

not be used for intelligence-gathering. But the agreement was not finalized during Brezhnev's visit as had been expected, apparently falling victim to India's determination to avoid even indirect encouragement of great-power naval presence in the Indian Ocean.⁶⁰

Nor, of course, have the Indians been willing to grant exclusive port facilities to Soviet naval vessels in the Indian Ocean. According to former US Ambassador Paul Saxbe, the Russians "continually put pressure on" the Indian government to provide facilities.⁶¹ But the Indians have loudly trumpeted their refusal--most recently, in a statement by Foreign Minister Vajpayee in June 1977: "There has been no secret agreement [on Soviet naval rights] and there will not be. . . ."⁶²

The Realm of Propaganda and "Culture." The substantial Soviet resources devoted to propaganda and promotion of cultural exchanges in India have already been noted. There was, in fact, a noticeable increase in both the scope and impact of the Soviet effort in the months following the 1971 war on the subcontinent. Representatives of the Soviet Information Office became more active in promoting the placement of pro-Soviet and anti-American articles in the Indian press, with the process often assisted through the provision of gifts or the payment of subsidies. In contrast to earlier years--as, for example, in 1970 when government officials treated Soviet-sponsored Lenin Centenary celebrations in a very low-key fashion--it was more "fashionable" in 1972 for political figures to be associated with Soviet-sponsored activities. Thus, the tenth anniversary convention of the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society in May of that year, at which a plan for expanded cultural operations between the two countries was signed, had so many Indian VIP's in attendance that the meeting had the air of official sponsorship.

In March 1973, the government council of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations approved a proposal for the establishment of an Indo-Soviet Studies Center in India, whose purpose would be to bring Indian and Soviet academicians closer together for cooperative studies. And in October 1973 a two-year Soviet-Indian protocol on Cooperation in Television and Radio was signed. This agreement called for the exchange of television and radio programs on social, economic, cultural, athletic, scientific and literary subjects, as well as for the exchange of professional personnel in the communications field.

Despite their capabilities and achievements, the Soviets have on occasion displayed a heavy-handed manner which has offset some of their potential gain with Indian audiences. For example, a three-man Soviet "scholarly" delegation which visited Poona University in November 1971 bitterly criticized the syllabus of a course on Soviet Government and told the faculty to keep in touch with ISCUS in order to obtain "authentic" books on the Soviet Union. Their talks with faculty members were said to have had an offensive and assertive tone, and during a public meeting, they refused to allow any discussion of the Brezhnev Doctrine with the audience.

Soviet diplomats have on occasion sought to persuade the Indian government to ban the publication of material which they consider anti-Soviet. The only known case of their success in this effort, however, came in 1967, when the Soviets persuaded the Indian government to force cuts to be made in the Western film Dr. Zhivago on the grounds that it contained anti-Soviet material.

The Indian government, for its part, has on occasion conveyed its own complaints to the Soviets concerning propaganda from Moscow. During a parliamentary debate in February 1969 concerning certain broadcasts from Radio Peace and Progress deemed critical of the Indian government, Dinesh Singh revealed that India had expressed its dissatisfaction to Soviet authorities, but he refused to be drawn by opposition parties into an outright condemnation of the broadcasts as an "unfriendly act." In November 1970, following a Radio Moscow broadcast criticizing the Supreme Court over its decision in the bank nationalization case, Swaran Singh told parliamentary critics that the foreign office had taken the matter up with the Soviet authorities and had been assured that there would be no cause for complaint in the future.

The overall impact of the Soviet activity in the propaganda and cultural fields is difficult to assess, but there is no clear indication that the payoff for Moscow in this field is proportionate to the substantial efforts and resources it expends. As Stephen Clarkson's thorough study documents, the attitudes of the Indian elite seem rather impervious to Soviet efforts to shape their perceptions. And apart from the avowedly leftist or pro-Communist press, there appears to be considerably more coverage of the United States in India's newspapers than is devoted to the Soviet Union.

Economic Assistance and Trade. The scope and importance for India's economy of the aid and trade relationship with the Soviet Union has already been commented upon. Our purpose here is to examine this relationship for signs of Soviet influence and for its spillover into the political linkages between Moscow and New Delhi. Of course, the very fact that the aid and

trade ties have grown to the present level is itself in large part a product of political calculations on both sides.

But the turn toward the Soviet economy has produced both disappointments and strains in the Indo-Soviet relationship. Indian hopes probably peaked at the time of Kosygin's visit in early 1968. For the Soviet Prime Minister left his Indian hosts with the impression that the Soviets were prepared to import sufficient Indian manufactures to permit Soviet-built plants to operate at full capacity. The Soviets may have deliberately fostered this impression in part to head off Indian criticism of the impending arms deal with Pakistan, and partly to project an image in advance of the UNCTAD conference of Moscow's willingness to do more for the developing countries. Whatever the Soviet motives, Indian hopes for a "new turn" in the Soviet aid policy were shattered by the visit of a high foreign trade official, S. A. Skachkov, the following autumn. After an extensive tour of Soviet-aided plants in the public sector, Skachkov harshly criticized Indian performance in management and made it clear that the Soviets would not import Indian products unless they could use the products in their domestic economy or re-export them, and unless the Indian price were at the world market level.

Despite the relatively high levels of Soviet assistance, many of Moscow's credits have gone unutilized, and the Indians have had little success in their attempts to influence the Soviets to change the pattern of their aid and trade relationship. Not only are the Soviet and Indian economies noncomplementary, but the Soviets have proved to be hardheaded bargainers whose insistence on "businesslike dealings" is manifested by a reluctance to incur economic costs simply for the purpose of picking up a few additional political credits in New Delhi. The Indians have occasionally

complained about an apparent Russian search for one-sided economic advantages. One incident occurred during 1975, when a visiting Soviet trade delegation, negotiating the export of fertilizer, demanded a 60-70 percent markup in price--which they later scaled down to 35-40 percent when the Indians refused to pay.⁶³

An Indian complaint of broader significance concerns the effort by the USSR unilaterally to revise the rupee-ruble exchange rate. The Soviets argued that the falling price of the pound sterling--to which the rupee is linked--justified a revision of the exchange rate from 11.39 rubles per hundred rupees in 1971 to 8.66 per hundred in 1975. The Indians argued that the Soviets were creating a double standard, since the value of the ruble in terms of gold is set arbitrarily and is not subject to market forces. Since India's debt repayment to the USSR is made in rupees, the effect of the Soviet action would be to allow Moscow to purchase more Indian goods with its rupees.⁶⁴ India's acceptance of the Soviet argument would have meant an addition of \$160 million to an Indian debt standing, as of mid-1976, at \$450 million.

The issue dragged on through many rounds of negotiation, during which both sides adhered stubbornly to their positions. At one stage the Soviets--apparently interested in establishing a precedent--reportedly offered partially to write off the differential in debt repayment by means of a 50-year loan at nominal interest, if in turn the Indians would agree to apply the new rate to all past and future transactions. The Janata government was reluctant to conclude such an arrangement, arguing that it would amount to a de facto devaluation. According to a press report, discussion of the issue was to be elevated to the "political level,"⁶⁵ and there were

signs later in 1978 that a compromise solution was in sight. Though it will be interesting to see which side concedes more in the final solution to the problem, the very fact of the length and difficulty of the negotiations is testimony to the limits of their mutual political influence when far-reaching questions of economic benefit are at stake.

The 15-year economic agreement signed by Mrs. Gandhi and Brezhnev during the latter's visit to India symbolized the firm, long-term basis of the Indo-Soviet economic relationship, but it failed to provide specific confirmation that the Soviets were willing to be more forthcoming in acceding to India's economic requests. A series of expert-level meetings have been held in recent years for the purpose of negotiating details to flesh out the skeleton agreement. Discussions have centered on problems of improving the workings of industrial projects built in India with Soviet aid, cooperating in the design and construction of joint industrial and other projects in third countries, and extending cooperation in the fields of science and technology.⁶⁶ The long timeframe is a first for India and the two sides have been slow to achieve concrete progress on the new cooperative ventures that the agreement envisions.

With respect to future Soviet economic assistance, the 1973 Joint Declaration noted merely that "when necessary, the Government of the USSR will render the Government of India appropriate economic assistance." India has developed well beyond the point of being an international mendicant and her needs are most frequently for technologies and forms of assistance that Moscow is hard-pressed to supply. Two-thirds of the 300 million ruble credit granted by the Soviets in 1966 had yet to be used by the end of 1977, and there were no readily apparent uses for the new 250 million ruble credit announced during Gromyko's 1977 visit.

As for Soviet-Indian trade, the pledge contained in the joint declaration to raise its volume "one-and-a-half to two times by 1980" promised--in light of trends then existing--no spectacular leap in Indo-Soviet commerce. Moreover, the Indian effort to obtain more raw materials from the Soviet Union in return for greater exports of Indian manufactured goods failed to gain public endorsement from Brezhnev during his last visit. The joint declaration called merely for trade cooperation between the two countries to "take into account the specialization and production cooperation in individual types of manufactured produce" and to increase "reciprocal deliveries of goods needed by the USSR and India." In the critical areas of petroleum and newsprint, the Soviets reportedly invited Indian investment in Soviet facilities extracting these resources in return for a specified supply of the products, but limited Indian resources made such an approach fruitless.

However, the Indians subsequently managed to negotiate agreements with the Soviet Union to assist in the critical area of fuel resources--thus demonstrating again their high standing with Moscow. During the energy crisis of 1974, the USSR agreed to deliver to India one million tons of kerosene and 100,000 tons of diesel fuel. More importantly, the Soviets agreed in December 1976 to a long-term petroleum supply relationship with India that for the first time obligated Moscow to supply New Delhi with crude oil on a barter basis. The four-year trade protocol called for the Russians to deliver 5.5 million metric tons of crude oil--1 million tons in 1977 and 1.5 million in the three subsequent years--in return for Indian pig iron. The foreign exchange savings for India--and the consequent loss of hard currency earnings for the USSR--were indeed significant.⁶⁷

The other agreement, announced in the same month, occurred in the politically sensitive area of nuclear fuel supplies. Prior to India's detonation of a "peaceful" nuclear explosion in May 1974, the United States and Canada had served as her sources of supply for heavy water and enriched uranium. But these sources were at least temporarily cut off by the adverse Canadian and American reactions to India's nuclear test, and as 1976 drew to a close the Indians badly needed a supply of heavy water to recharge their reactor in Rajasthan. It was announced in December that the USSR had agreed to sell India 240 tons of heavy water, 25 percent of which would be shipped immediately, subject only to an Indian pledge that it would not be used in the production of plutonium for explosive devices.

The Soviet sale was at first seen in the West as a departure from Moscow's rigid non-proliferation stance, for there was no immediate indication that the Indians would be required to agree to international safeguards on all their nuclear reactors. This New Delhi, in its dealings with North American suppliers, had previously refused to do. The Soviet Union, however, was apparently not willing in this case to dilute its non-proliferation principles for the prospect of political gain in New Delhi, and it successfully applied its influence, in a case where India's "need" was strong, to achieve a modification of the Indian position. The outcome is described as follows by a Western specialist on the subject:

By mid-1977, however, it became evident that the Soviets did not intend to transfer any more than 25 percent of the heavy water until a safeguards agreement with the Indians was in hand. . . . What began as a gesture of political support from the Soviets ended in a disconcerting situation for the Indians. The Soviets have pressed them to agree to apply tight safeguards uniformly to all their reactors for an indefinite period of time as a condition of this single sale of heavy water. The Indians, who stood for guarantees only on the use

of the reactors infused with this particular shipment of heavy water, and only for the period of time the Soviet heavy water is physically in the reactors, were ultimately forced to accept the Soviet position. Soviet pressure on the Indians, pursued despite the political interest Moscow may have in lending support to India, has been much harsher than anyone expected.⁶⁸

Some of the political advantage which might have accrued to the Soviet Union from its aid program in India has been dissipated through heavy-handed tactics or economic blunders. The behavior of two Soviet delegations visiting India in 1968 evoked sharp criticism in the press. Deputy Foreign Minister Firyubin's entourage was said by the Times of India to have acted "in the manner of representatives of an imperial power dealing with a dependency," and foreign aid coordinator Skachkov was said by The Statesman to have behaved "rather like a viceroy of yore on an inspection tour."⁶⁹

Even the giant Bokaro steel complex, which the Soviets agreed to construct after the project was turned down by the United States, generated considerable controversy in India. Resentment has stemmed in part from the employment of Soviet rather than Indian engineers on the project, whose completion date was pushed back by over five years at a cost of \$45 million. And considerable criticism was aroused when the Soviets refused in 1968 to allow the participation of an Indian engineering firm whose recommendations for certain cost-saving modifications to Soviet plans had become public. The Indian government pointedly demonstrated its dissatisfaction with the Soviet role at Bokaro by deciding to refuse the offer of Soviet participation in construction of the second stage of the giant complex. The decision, first announced a few days prior to Gromyko's arrival in April 1977, was officially couched by both New Delhi and Moscow

in terms of India's achievement of a "self-reliant" position in steel production--heretofore the primary sector of Soviet-Indian economic collaboration. The main purpose of the 250 million ruble credit announced during Gromyko's visit was thereby obviated, though the Russians hastily agreed that it could be used for any other projects mutually agreed upon.

Subsequent press reports indicated, however, that the Indians were actually seeking a better grade of technology than the Russians could supply. In August 1977, a steel ministry spokesman confirmed that the Soviets lacked the necessary "sophisticated technology" for completion of the Bokaro plant, and that two American firms had been approached for help on the project.⁷⁰ The Bokaro case could thus be seen as an instance of a more general Indian shift from Soviet to Western industrial technology. Other recent examples of this phenomenon include the replacement of Soviet designs for 200-megawatt power generators by West German designs (for generators with 1,000-megawatt capacity), the gradual displacement of Russian antibiotics by drugs based on Italian technology, the replacement of Russian and Rumanian oil-exploration experts and of Soviet oil rigs with Western ones. As explained by the Economist, the "coming of age" of Indian industry had necessitated a search for the "best" technology--which Moscow was only rarely able to supply.⁷¹

Also in the pharmaceutical area, extensive publicity was given to the report of a parliamentary committee which criticized the Indian government for its handling of a Soviet-financed pharmaceutical plant. The committee charged that the Russians, using estimates of demand "assumed" from the Soviet experiences, had persuaded the government to set up a plan to produce drugs in quantities up to 1000 percent of India's own needs. The production

cost of another drug was underestimated by Soviet experts by a factor of 10. A recommendation that more advanced Western techniques should be employed had simply been ignored by the government. And the drug plant itself was said to consist of "second-hand equipment." The committee concluded that "the decision to enter into collaborative arrangements with the Soviet Union was taken on considerations other than technical and without conducting a demand survey or economic feasibility study." Soon afterward, a second Soviet-aided project in the medical field, a plant producing surgical instruments, was criticized on the grounds that up to three-quarters of the Soviet-specified instruments it produced were not acceptable to Indian surgeons. In one case, 20,000 units of a particular instrument had been produced in 1966-67 even though only one such instrument had been sold in the entire country during the previous year.

The Soviet image was further tarnished by a report appearing in the Indian press concerning the unequal treatment afforded to visiting Soviet and Indian specialists working under aid agreements. In the case of one agreement, visiting Soviet specialists had first class return fares for themselves and their families paid by the Indian firm, and were provided in India with luxury flats, medical benefits, canteens with special food, and free transportation to work. On the other hand, Indian specialists visiting the Soviet Union were not allowed to take their families, lived two in a room, and paid their own expenses.

In the field of oil exploration, Soviet assistance to the Indian government was evidently so unsatisfactory that contracts were eventually awarded to American and Japanese firms. Offshore drilling efforts in the Gulf of Cambay were at one point entirely abandoned because of the shoddy Soviet equipment.

Another example from the aid and trade sphere illustrates further the apparent heightened Soviet perception of need of the Indians. The case concerns the 1973 Soviet grain loan to India, which was announced in the midst of a mounting food crisis and political unrest in that country. By that point, the government had had to suspend its own buying on the world market due to excessively high prices, partially resulting from Moscow's own buying. Not until the eve of the announcement of Brezhnev's visit, when the first signs of the record 1973 Soviet harvest had appeared, did the Soviets make their offer, in a personal letter from Brezhnev to Mrs. Gandhi, to lend the Indians two million tons of wheat and rice. The generous terms of the loan called for Indian repayment in kind, with a moratorium for the first two years, and then equal installments of 400,000 tons for the next five years.⁷² India and the USSR were to share equally in the costs of transporting the grain. Mrs. Gandhi publicly described the offer as "unsolicited" and therefore all the more appreciated, and she termed it a sign of growing Soviet-Indian friendship. It certainly bailed the Indians out of a difficult situation, and helped to create a more responsive atmosphere during Brezhnev's visit.

Perhaps the most spectacular failure in the commercial field was the proposed arrangement, promised by Kosygin during his 1968 trip, for the Soviet Union to purchase all the rails and railway wagons that India could produce over the next five years (though in fact Soviet railways were built on a different scale). This pledge raised Indian hopes of boosting the production of some of their public-sector industries to a level closer to full capacity. A protocol was signed calling for 2,000 cars to be delivered in 1969, and up to 10,000 per year by 1973, with a total over the

period of 26,000. But the deal fell through after prolonged haggling between the two sides. The Soviets offered a price amounting to roughly one-half of India's production costs, and then stipulated in the specifications for the wheel assemblies the use of lead and zinc alloys which were available only from the USSR at a high price. The Russians reportedly even attempted to make their purchase of Indian railway wagons conditional on India's purchase of Soviet commercial aircraft. When the deal finally collapsed, the Indians tried to convince Soviet negotiators of their obligation to buy other manufactured goods equivalent in price to the rejected railway wagons. But this argument was apparently spurned by the Soviets.⁷³

Nor was Soviet influence sufficient to bring the Indians to a decision to purchase Soviet aircraft for their domestic air fleet. The Indians had seemed willing to buy the TU-154's before the collapse of the railway wagon deal, and even after that fell through, the extremely favorable credit terms offered by Moscow seemed to give the Russians the edge. But in January 1970, it was announced that India had decided to purchase 7 Boeing 737's instead of the Soviet planes. Still, Indian Air Lines needed as many as three dozen additional planes during the next several years, and the Soviet negotiators continued to make a determined effort to persuade the government to buy the Soviet rather than the American product. Though their planes had the disadvantage, however, of high fuel consumption and the need for frequent engine overhauls, which could be performed only in the USSR, the Russians were said to be offering their TU-154 against deferred rupee payments at 3 percent interest. However, the Soviet efforts to produce an attractive package, together with their own political leverage

and that of powerful allies within the Indian government, failed to outweigh the advantages in economy of operation of the American plane.

Even in the sphere of merchandising in arms, the Soviets have recently been unable to use their political sway to persuade the Indians not to deal with the "competition." The coincidence of a new government in New Delhi with the greater availability of foreign exchange has resulted in a greater Indian disposition to shop for military supplies in the West. A press report in the summer of 1977 indicated that India had decided to purchase the French "Magic" air combat missile for its air force in preference to an offer from the Soviet Union. According to this report, India "will go in for the best equipment regardless of political considerations and the rupee trade account."⁷⁴ A week later, the same journal reported on a debate occurring within the Indian air force over the purchase of a new deep penetration strike aircraft. According to the article, an "anti-Soviet faction" had "revived the argument that Moscow's deliveries of spares are slow, especially for the transport TU-124's and the Ilyushin-14 bombers."⁷⁵

Another report on the competition for India's aircraft order, published the following spring, revealed that the Soviet Union was seeking to "undercut" the terms being offered by three Western bidders. By this account, the Soviet offer of an improved version of the MIG-23, delayed by Moscow's unwillingness to alienate the Pakistanis, had been made during Marshal Kutakhov's visit in March. The advantages posed by the Soviet offer--foreign exchange savings and the possibility of local production--were said to be weighed against the government's wish to diversify its source of supply. India's decision was reportedly "hanging fire" pending

Defense Minister Ram's May visit to the USSR, but India was said to be coming under "heavy Soviet pressure" in the negotiations.⁷⁶

Soviet pressure again proved inadequate, however; it was announced in October that India would accept an Anglo-French offer to supply the Jaguar aircraft. The \$1.6 billion deal involved the immediate purchase of 40 Jaguars, utilizing British credits, and the establishment of production facilities in India for the manufacture of at least 160 more planes over the next decade. At the same time that he announced this decision, Defense Minister Ram also revealed that India was negotiating with European manufacturers of submarines for the establishment of a submarine plant in India.⁷⁷ What is illustrated by these examples is not merely the failure of Soviet influence in the critical realm of arms resupply, but also the dogged Indian determination to avoid a relationship of dependence on the USSR and to achieve a position of military self-reliance. As Prime Minister Desai put it in an interview in June 1978, in the context of a discussion of India's technological borrowing, "we must learn and then be independent again, not remain perpetually dependent on someone else."⁷⁸

MUTUAL DEPENDENCY: A SHIFTING BALANCE?

The Soviet Union has invested in India a large volume of material resources and diplomatic energy. Much of Moscow's effort to strengthen India's economy and military capability has been designed to serve the Soviet interest in promoting India as an Asian counterweight to China. The available evidence on the Soviet-Indian relationship in recent years, however, leads to the conclusion that the return on this Soviet investment, in terms of observable political influence, has been small indeed.

Since 1967, there appear to have been only three cases in which Moscow was clearly able to cause New Delhi to do something which it would not have done otherwise: (1) the ban on the showing in India of the uncut version of the Western film Dr. Zhivago in 1967; (2) the Indian government's hasty action in 1970, under Soviet pressure, in bringing about the closing of four US cultural centers, following the discovery that an unauthorized Soviet cultural center was being constructed in Trivandrum; and (3) the apparent Indian agreement to accept stringent safeguards on all its nuclear reactors as a condition of the Soviet sale of heavy water.

But in the overwhelming majority of cases, the Soviet Union has been rebuffed in its efforts to influence Indian behavior. In some of these cases, there is an evident and mutual disposition to discuss differences in private to limit the impact of disagreements on a relationship both sides value highly. Moreover, when indications of disagreement or irritation have publicly surfaced in the press or parliament, Indian government officials have usually gone to great lengths to minimize the significance of friction or to stress the positive aspects of Indo-Soviet relations. During Mrs. Gandhi's tenure, this practice was in marked contrast to the Indian government's repeated practice of emphasizing the alleged misdeeds of Moscow's main rival, the United States. Significantly, the Desai government--as shown in its restrained handling of the public and parliamentary outcry over the discovery of a CIA attempt at "nuclear espionage" in the Himalayas in the early 1960's--seems to have reversed this one-sided behavior in dealings with the two superpowers.

Indian decisionmakers perceive a well-defined need for Soviet support in both military and economic spheres, especially in light of the long

American arms embargo, the reduction of US aid and--more important--the Sino-US detente. On the other hand, India's 1971 victory, the growth of its indigenous arms industry and emergence of a nuclear capability, and its needs for imports and economic assistance which the Communist bloc is unable or unwilling to provide--together with the shift in American policy--help place definite limits on India's perception of its need of the Soviet Union. For its part, Moscow perceives that the special relationship with India has brought diplomatic and commercial benefits which the Soviets are reluctant to jeopardize. So the evolution of Indo-Soviet relations has resulted in a symbiosis, but one in which the balance of dependency has changed dramatically. Indeed, developments since 1971 suggest that Soviet importance to India and its ability to influence Indian decisions peaked during the Indo-Pakistan crisis and have subsequently declined, whereas the Indian ability to exert influence in Moscow may be growing.

A return to our original framework will help to explain why this is so. In pursuit of its broad objectives on South Asia and in its efforts to exert influence there, the Soviet Union has not been hampered by a shortage of capabilities. Moscow has invested heavily in India, providing both military and economic assistance and diplomatic support in uncharacteristically generous fashion. Although we have noted numerous instances of hard "businesslike" bargaining by the Soviets, there have also been notable occasions when Moscow has been willing to provide valuable resources--such as grain and crude oil--in situations where the quest for political advantage has clearly overpowered its economic interests. Moreover, the Soviet assistance has often come at times of great Indian need, and it is

the timeliness as much as the quantity of Moscow's aid and support that New Delhi has publicly appreciated.

If the possession of valued resources and the willingness to use them were the sole or even primary determinant of success in the quest for influence, then Moscow would certainly have achieved far more than the record actually has shown. In fact, however, it is in the less tangible realms of "need" and "responsiveness" that the Soviets have more frequently run aground. Our survey of the Soviet-Indian relationship has revealed that it was in the period prior to New Delhi's 1971 military victory that Moscow's influence appeared to be greatest, for it was during these years that India was most in need of outside support. Her strengthened position in the subcontinent after 1972, together with the pronounced determination of her leaders to erase the vestiges of prior dependence, have led India in recent years to exhibit far less responsiveness to Soviet requests than earlier.

Thus we have increasingly seen in the Soviet-Indian relationship examples of the modern-day "paradox of power" that has been evident in numerous cases of American dealings with smaller "client states" as well as in Moscow's own relationship with Egypt.⁷⁹ Superpower involvement in complex regional conflicts can lead to investments and commitments which ultimately restrict freedom of action, nullify powerful resources, and create a state of dependence of the "patron" upon its "client." By skillfully exploiting this development, the "weak" states of the Third World have greatly expanded their own influence, and are thereby likely to continue to play an important role in the international politics of the last two decades of the twentieth century.

ENDNOTES

1. Initial research on this paper was done in 1973-74, while I was serving as an International Affairs Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations. I am grateful to the Council for its assistance, and to W. Dean Howells of the Department of State for many helpful suggestions. The research was completed during my service as Visiting Research Professor at the Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, to which institution I am also indebted.
2. The framework I am employing is a modification of the one utilized by K. J. Holsti, which is, in turn, partially derived from the work of Robert Dahl, Karl Deutsch, and others. See Holsti's International Politics: A Framework for Analysis, second edition (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972), chapter 6.
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Indian decisionmakers perceive a well-defined need for Soviet support in both military and economic spheres, but India's growing self-reliance places definite limits on her perceived need of the Soviet Union. For its part, Moscow perceives that the special relationship with India has brought diplomatic and commercial benefits which the Soviets are reluctant to jeopardize. ~~So~~ the evolution of Indo-Soviet relations has resulted in a symbiosis, but one in which the balance of dependency has changed dramatically. ~~Indeed,~~ developments since 1971 suggest that Soviet importance to India and its ability to influence Indian decisions peaked during the Indo-Pakistan crisis and have subsequently declined, whereas the Indian ability to exert influence in Moscow may be growing.

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